

DIALOGUES

OF THE

D E A D,

IN THREE PARTS.

Translated from the FRENCH of

Le Beau
Monsieur De FONTENELLE, (B.)

By JOHN HUGHES, Esq;

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DIABLOUES

OF THE

D E A D

THE

THE



THE

T H E
C O N T E N T S.

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T O

L U C I A N

I N T H E

E L Y S I A N F I E L D S.

Illustrious Shade,

I THINK myself obliged, in justice, to pay you some sort of homage for an idea I have borrowed from you. That author, who has furnished the greatest aids to a book, is certainly the true hero of the dedication. His praises we can publish with the most sincerity, and it is him we ought to chuse our patron. Perhaps I shall be thought too assured, for daring to work after your plan: but I should think myself much more so, if I ventured upon one of my own. I have some reason now to flatter myself, that the materials, which are mine, will be received for the sake of the design, which is yours. And I will venture to say, that if my dialogues, by chance, should find some small success, they would do you more honour than even your own have done; since it would appear, that this idea is in itself so beauti-

ful, that it does not need to be skilfully executed. For my own particular, I have had such a firm dependance upon it, that I have believed a part of it sufficient for me. I have therefore laid aside Pluto, Charon, Cerberus, and whatever else belongs to the Inferi. But how concerned am I to think that you have exhausted all those fine subjects of the equality among the dead, of their regret of life, of the false constancy which philosophers affect to shew in death, of the ridiculous destiny of those young people who die before old men, whom they made court to, and thought themselves sure to inherit. Yet the design being wholly yours, it was but reasonable, I confess, you should make the best of your own invention, and chuse that which was the most beautiful in it.

I HAVE endeavoured, at least, to imitate you in the end you proposed. As all your dialogues include their moral, so all my dead moralize; it would not else have been worth while to make them speak; for the living might have sufficed to say things of no use. There is this conveniency too, that it may be supposed the dead are people of deep reflection, as well from their experience as their leisure; and it ought to be believed, for their honour, that they think somewhat more than is usual in life. They reason on things above, better than we, because they regard them with much more indifference and tranquillity, and they are inclined to reason on them, because they still pretend to some remaining interest in them. You have made the greatest part of their dialogues so short, that it appears you did not take them for great talkers, and

I have readily fallen in with your opinion. For the dead, not wanting sense, must presently see to the end of things. I found no difficulty likewise to imagine, that they might be enlightened enough to agree upon every thing with one another, and consequently not to wrangle, or but very rarely. For I fancy disputing belongs only to us ignorants, who do not discover the truth: as it is a misfortune incident only to the blind, who cannot see the point they are making towards, to fall out and jostle in the road. But we cannot, here above, conceive how the dead should have changed their characters so far, as no longer to have any opposite sentiments: for when we have once in the world conceived an opinion of people, we know not how to part with it. Thus then I have applied myself to bring the dead into knowledge again, at least those who are of much note. You made no difficulty to suppose some, and possibly some of the adventures too which you attribute to them; but I thought I had no occasion for this privilege; history furnished me with real persons, and real adventures enough, to excuse me from borrowing any supplies from fiction.

Now, that the dead should speak of events, much later than their own time, will be no surprize to you, who see them every day discoursing on affairs with one another. I dare be confident, that even at this moment, you are perfectly acquainted with France by an infinity of reports, and that you know she is at present the same in learning, which Greece was formerly. Above all, your fa-

x TO LUCIAN, ETC.

mous translator*, who has so admirably taught you to speak our language, will not fail to tell you, that Paris has had the same taste for your works with Rome and Athens. Happy he who could copy your style like this great man, and be master of that refined simplicity in his expression, and that easy and genteel humour, which are so proper for dialogue! For my own part, I am far from pretending to the glory of having imitated you well; I only aspire to that of having well known it was impossible to imitate a more excellent model.

* The Sieur D' Ablancourt.

D I A L O G U E S

OF THE

D E A D.

A N T I E N T.

DIARY

THE

DEAD

ANTHONY

D I A L O G U E S

OF THE

D E A D.

D I A L O G U E I.

ALEXANDER the Great, and PHRINE.

P H R I N E.

ASK any of the Thebans that lived in my time, if I did not offer to rebuild, at my own proper charge, the walls of Thebes which you had destroyed? on condition only that they would set this inscription upon them-----
Alexander the Great demolished these walls, but Phrine the Courtesan restored them.

Alex. It seems you were in a mighty concern, lest posterity should not know what trade you followed.

Phri. Let my trade answer for itself, I excelled in it; and great persons, you know, of all professions, have the folly of monuments and inscriptions.

Alex. It is true, Rhodope had before you; she made so fine a market of her beauty, as to be able to build one of the famous Egyptian pyramids,

standing to this hour. I remember she was talking of it the other day to some French misses, who pretended to have been as lovely as the best; but the poor devils cried heartily, to think that in their age and country the fair could raise no such pyramid-fortunes.

Phri. But I had the advantage of Rhodope; for, in rebuilding the walls of Thebes, I put myself in parallel with you, who were the greatest conqueror in the world; and I made it appear that my beauty could repair the ruins that were made by your valour.

Alex. Was ever such a comparison heard of before! Well, and you are mightily satisfied then that you had so many gallants?

Phri. And you are mightily satisfied that you made a desert of the best part of the earth? How finely you had been served, if every city you destroyed had found a Phrine to rebuild it! Not a mark of your fury had been left.

Alex. Were I to live again, I should be the same great conqueror I was.

Phri. And I the same † little conqueror. Beauty has a natural right to govern mankind, valour has no more than it gains by force. The charms of fine women are found in all countries, so are not kings nor conquerors: but to convince you more, your father Philip, you will own, was valiant enough, and so were you, I think, with a vengeance; yet with all your fierceness, you could neither of you frighten Demosthenes the orator,

† In the last French edition, it is *lovely conqueror*; the reader may take which he likes.

who did nothing but rail, and make speeches against you both as long as he lived. But there was another Phrine, for mine, let me tell you, is a lucky name, who had lost a cause of great consequence, if her council, having exhausted his eloquence for her in vain, had not whispered her in the ear to slip aside her vail: she did so, and upon the sight of such surprizing beauty, the court, who were just giving sentence against her, immediately changed their mind. Thus you see that the noise of your conquests, for several years together, could not stop the mouth of one declaiming orator, and yet the charms of a pretty woman, in an instant, could corrupt the severity of the whole Areopagus.

Alex. Well, make the most of that name-sake of yours that you have called to your assistance, yet I am mistaken if the part of Alexander is like to prove the weaker. It would be very hard if-----

Phri. I know what you are going to say now -----Greece, Asia, Persia, the Indies, all these make a fine show. But then let me only take from you what you have no right to, and distribute fairly to your officers, your common soldiers, and to fortune herself, their proper shares of the glory, and do ye think this will not take you down a little, and make you something more slender? Now a handsome woman owes her conquests entirely to herself, and no body comes in for a share with her. Oh! it is the finest thing in the world to be a fine woman!

Alex. Yes----you gave sufficient proofs that you

thought so: but pray does a fine woman come up to your excesses?

Phri. Look ye, I make a conscience of lying, and therefore I say----no; and to be very sincere with you, I own I over-stretched the character of a fine woman; but so did you that of a great man, and so let us shake hands. You and I made too many conquests. If I had been engaged in no more than two or three intrigues, this had been modest, and no body could have found fault; but how should modesty get money enough to build city-walls? And then as to your part, had you only conquered Greece, and half a dozen little islands, or perhaps a small spot in the lesser Asia, why----there had been reason and conscience in this. But to run raving up and down, and not know whither; to fight and take towns, and not know why; and to be always in a hurry of action about no body knows what: it is this has offended the men of sober sense.

Alex. Let the men of sober sense say what they please; I am sure, if I had been so sober in the use of my valour and fortune, I had never been half so much talked of.

Phri. Nor I, if I had made such sober use of my beauty. For, in short, when one only designs to make a noise in the world, it is not found that the most reasonable characters are the most proper for the purpose.

DIALOGUE II.

MILo of Crotona, and SMINDIRIDES.

SMINDIRIDES.

THOU art strangely proud, Milo, of having carried an ox on thy shoulders at the Olympic games.

Milo. Why, by Jove, it was an extraordinary performance; all Greece applauded it, and the echo of my fame reached as far as my own native town Crotona; which, let me tell you, has sent out a vast number of the stoutest wrestlers. On the contrary, thy Sibaris will be a proverb to eternity, for the infamous effeminacy of its inhabitants, who banished all the cocks in the town for fear of being waked by their crowing; and used to invite their guests to dinner a year before-hand, that they might have leisure enough to contrive what dainties they should have.

Smin. All stuff and banter!-----Why you lubberly clown! had not you the sense to know, that to huff and vapour, upon your carrying an ox, was but to boast yourself like the beast you carried?

Milo. And, pray, what were you like? Not a man, I am sure, when you complained you had passed a whole night without a wink, because one of the rose-leaves your bed was strewed with lay folded in two under you!

Smin. I own it, I had that niceness you speak of; but why dost thou think it so strange?

Milo. Why, who the devil can think otherwise?

Smin. What, have you never seen a lover, that, having courted his mistress with very particular services, has afterward, in the full possession of her favours, dashed his joy with this scruple, That it was gratitude more than inclination prevailed in the fair one's heart?

Milo. No, never----but what then?

Smin. And did you never hear of a conqueror, who, after some glorious expedition, has been dissatisfied with his triumph, to think that fortune had a greater share in it than, perhaps, either his courage or conduct, and that his success was owing to foolish designs and mistaken measures?

Milo. Never in my life----but, once again, what do ye argue from this?

Smin. Why, that this lover and conqueror aforesaid, and indeed almost all men in general, though stretched on couches of flowers, cannot sleep a wink, if but one of the leaves happen to be folded. The slightest things in the world can destroy our pleasures; they are beds of roses, in which it is almost impossible to have all the leaves smooth, but some of necessity will be doubled, and one such is enough to make us very uneasy.

Milo. Well, for my part, I own myself no doctor in these matters; but, in my plain opinion, you, and your lover and conqueror, may go together for three loggerheads. What do ye make yourselves such nice fops for?

Smin. Why, prithee, dost think people of wit

are such bull-hided curs as thou? I tell thee, no; they are all Sibarites softer than myself.

Milo. Yes, now I perceive the policy of the business. Your wits have more pleasures than they have occasion for, and so they let their niceness retrench them, and pare off the superfluous ones. For this reason they would be sensible of the least disagreements, and no doubt they are very wise folks.

Smin. No such matter, in troth! your wits have not more pleasures than they have occasion for.

Milo. Then, in troth, your wits are downright fools, to trouble their heads about such niceties.

Smin. Why there is the mischief of it now! Delicacy becomes a man very well; it is a disposition arising from the best qualities of the head and heart. We are pleased to find that we have it; and, if we have it not, we are willing to acquire it. But, in the mean time, this delicacy lessens the number of our pleasures, which, in truth, we are not overstocked with, and makes our sensation of them less sprightly, whereas of themselves they are scarce sprightly enough. What a wretched thing is man! his natural condition affords him but little that is agreeable, and his reason teaches him to taste it yet less.

D I A L O G U E III.

DIDO and STRATONICE.

D I D O.

AH, my Stratonice! how unhappy am I? You know how I lived: I maintained so religious a fidelity to my first husband, that I burned myself alive to avoid marrying a second; and yet I have not been secure from slander. A certain poet, named Virgil, has been pleased to transform me from a grave discreet person into an arrant coquet, that lets herself run mad for the handsome mein of a stranger the very first day she sees him. All my history is turned topsy-turvy: indeed he has had the charity to leave me my pile of wood to burn myself. But what do ye think throws me upon it? Not the fear of a second marriage, I promise you; but despair, because my new guest is going to leave me.

Strat. In earnest this may prove of very dangerous consequence. What woman hereafter will have the grace to broil herself out of conjugal fidelity, if after her death a poet shall have the liberty to tell what tales of her he pleases? But your Virgil perhaps was not so much to blame; he discovered, for ought I know, some intrigue of your life, which you hoped would have remained secret. Who can tell? for my part you must excuse me, if I would not be bound to answer for you upon the credit of your wood pile.-----

Dido. If the intrigue Virgil has put upon me

had any resemblance of truth, it would not vex me. But he has given me one Aeneas for my lover, a fellow that was rotten three hundred years before I came into the world.

Strat. Ay, now you say something. However, your Aeneas and you seem to have been cut out for one another: both of you were forced to fly your country; both of you fought your fortunes in strange lands: he was a widower, and you a widow; do ye see how matters chime? It is true you were born about some three hundred years after him; but that is nothing; Virgil had such reason to make it a match, that he was resolved three hundred years distance should break no squares.

Dido. That is nothing, quoth a! what? are not three hundred years, full three hundred years? yet two persons, it seems, can meet and be sweet upon one another in spite of this obstacle!

Strat. Oh it is there Virgil has shewn his cunning. He was doubtless a man that knew the world, and designed to set forth, that in the business of intrigues appearance is no rule to judge by, and that those that appear least, are often the most true.

Dido. It is very well, and I must be scandalized, with a curse to him, to weave into his works this fine mystery!

Strat. Why so hasty? Has he buffooned you? or made you talk like a fool?

Dido. Nay, far enough from that; it is the finest part of his poem, where I make my appearance: he has repeated it to me here below. It is all divine, except the scandal; I am very handsome,

and upon my supposed passion I say the finest things in the world. So that if he had represented me there a woman of reputation, the Aeneis had not been half so beautiful.

Strat. Then, in short, you are mad, to complain. He has given you an intrigue you knew nothing of---a vile affront! but in requital he has given you a beauty and a wit, that perhaps you could never pretend to.

Dido. A fine consolation!

Strat. I do not know indeed your complexion; but, for the generality of women, I will answer for it, they had rather have their virtue suffer a little, than either their wit or beauty: and, for myself, I own I was of that humour too. A painter, in the court of the king of Syria my husband, had a secret grudge against me, and in revenge painted me in the embraces of a common foldier; he exposed the piece to view, and immediately took his heels. My subjects, full of indignation and zeal for my honour, would have burned the picture; but, because the rogue had drawn me admirably well, and with a world of beauty, though in a posture by no means advantageous to my virtue, I would not let it be burnt, but called the painter back, and pardoned him: and so should you Virgil, if you would be ruled by me.

Dido. It would be a hopeful world truly, if the highest merit in a woman were to be handsome, or a wit.

Strat. I will not meddle with the controversy about the highest merit: but I am sure, in common conversation, the first question people ask a

bout a woman that is a stranger to them is this
-----*Is she handsome?*-----The second-----*Has she*
wit?-----And it is very rare to have them ask you
a third.

DIALOGUE IV.

ANACREON and ARISTOTLE.

ARISTOTLE.

I COULD never have imagined that a little scrib-
bler of sonnets would have dared to rank himself
with a philosopher of my great reputation.

Anacr. You make a very lofty sound with that
word philosopher, methinks; yet your humble ser-
vant, with his little sonnets, made a shift to get
the name of the wise Anacreon: a title which, I
think, takes place of philosopher.

Arist. Those that gave you that title then had
no regard to what they said: pray what have you
ever done to merit it?

Anacr. Who, I?-----Nothing but drink and be
merry, sing songs, and make love; and here is the
wonder, that at this price I purchased the name of
wise, whereas it cost you a world of pains to get
only that of a philosopher: for, how many whole
nights have you sat up, beating your brains, and
winnowing dry distinctions and crabbed questions
of logic! How many huge unwieldy volumes have
you composed upon dark notions, that perhaps
you yourself never understood with all your po-
ring!

Arist. I confess you took a very commodious way to reach to wisdom; one must doubtless be mighty ingenious, to know how to acquire more glory with a fiddle and a bottle, than the greatest men have acquired with their watching and study.

Anacr. What, you are upon the rallying pin? But I will maintain it, that it is harder to drink and sing as I did, than to philosophize as you did. To be able to drink and sing like me, one must first have disengaged one's soul from all violent passions, and learned to aspire no more after what is not in our power; to be disposed always to seize the hours as they fly to us, and lay them out upon pleasure; in fine, a thousand little things are first to be set in order, and though there is no occasion for much logic in the business, yet it will cost you some pains to bring it handsomely about. But a man may philosophize as you did, upon more reasonable terms: for there is no necessity of his curbing ambition, or forswearing avarice; no, the gates of Alexander's palace are open to him, where he finds a very comfortable subsistence. Then comes a small present of some five hundred thousand crowns, which he is not fool enough to lay out wholly upon natural experiments, according to the design of the donor. And this sort of philosophy, I take it, leads to things as opposite to philosophy as can be.

Arist. Sure you have kept ill company here below, that have given you a very scandalous account of me. But when all is done, I say, a man is no man but by the advantage of his reason, and nothing is more noble than to inform others how

to use it in the study of nature, and how to unriddle all the difficulties she proposes to us.

Anacr. To see how men pervert every thing from its proper use! Philosophy herself, no doubt, is an admirable thing, and may be of the greatest service to them: but because her company would be troublesome if she thrust herself into their affairs, and staid at home with them to discipline their passions, therefore they have dispatched her away into the heavens to range the planets, and calculate their motions; or else they have led her a dance round the earth, to make her examine all they see upon it; in short, they have always found her employment far enough from themselves: and thus having a mind to be philosophers at a small expence, they have very cunningly stretched the name, and bestow it commonly upon such who only search into natural causes.

Arist. And what name more proper for them?

Anacr. The business of philosophy is only with man, and not with the rest of the universe: the astronomer's thoughts are taken up with the stars; the naturalist's with nature; and the philosopher's with himself. But who would be a philosopher on such hard terms? Very few, heaven knows: why then you must have a dispensation; philosophers are to be excused from being philosophers, and it is enough if they are astronomers or naturalists. For myself, I was never of a humour to trouble my head with nice speculations; but I will be bold to say, that there is not half so much philosophy in a multitude of books that pretend to treat of

it, as in some of my songs that appear so contemptible to you; as this, for example:

*If gold could wasted life restore,
I'd hoord in chests the precious ore;
And when grim death approach'd, I'd say,
Here take thy fee, and go away!
But since the fates are too severe,
What's gold to me?----Love, wine, good cheer,
Are better far than useless treasure:
I'll change my sordid cares for pleasure.*

Arist. If you are resolved then to call that only philosophy which regards the manners, I have several things among my moral writings which yet are much beyond your song: for in short, the obscurity I am charged withal, which perhaps may be found in some of my books, is not in the least to be observed in what I have written upon that subject; and the whole world has owned, that never any thing was finer, or more clear, than what I have said of the passions.

Anacr. What a cheat is that now! The question is not turned upon defining the passions methodically, as you are said to have done, but upon getting the mastery over them. Men are willing philosophy should read them lectures upon their evil habits, but not cure them; and they have found the secret of framing to themselves a system of morals that comes no more within reach of their passions, than astronomy does. What mortal can hold from shaking his sides, to see mercenary rogues, that for money will declaim against riches,

and cowards at daggers-drawing about the definition of courage!

DIALOGUE V.

HOMER and AESOP.

HOMER.

IN good earnest, all the fables, you have been repeating to me, can never be enough admired. It required a world of art, to disguise as you have done, in such little tales, the most important truths of morality, and to couch your thoughts under images so very just, and yet so familiar.

Aesop. It makes me not a little proud to be praised for this art, by one, who was himself so great a master of it.

Homer. Who I? why I never pretended to it.

Aesop. What! did you never pretend to imply great mysteries in your works?

Homer. Alas! not I.

Aesop. Why I am sure all the virtuoso's of my time said you did: and there was not a line in the *Iliads* nor the *Odyssseys*, but they fitted it with the quaintest allegories in the world. They maintained that there was no secret in divinity, natural and moral philosophy, and the mathematics to boot, but was fairly implied in your writings. Some difficulty indeed there was in unravelling them; and it may be where one sophister had found a moral meaning, another discovered a natural one:

but they agreed in this, that you knew all things, and said all things, to those of an enlightened understanding.

Homer. Without lying, I always suspected some people would spy out mysteries in my works, that I never apprehended myself. For as there is nothing like prophesying boldly of things a great way off, and trusting to the event, so there is no way like uttering fables without design, and leaving the allegory to be made hereafter.

Aesop. Sure you had a great deal of courage to entrust your readers with the weighty care of fitting allegories to your poems. What a case you had been in, if they had all taken them in the letter!

Homer. Why, if they had, the damage had been but small.

Aesop. How! Pray, what do you say for the brawls of your deities, that maim one another. Your thundering Jupiter, that in a full convocation of the gods threatens the august Juno to curry her into better manners; and that same bully Mars, who, when he was wounded by Diomedes, roared out, as you say, full as loud as nine or ten thousand men, yet shewed not the courage of one: for instead of hewing all the Greeks into shivers, his head is taken up about his wound, and making his *misereres* to Jupiter. Do ye think all this could have passed muster, without an allegory?

Homer. Why not, I pray? you are possessed with a fancy, that the human mind searches only for truth. Undeceive yourself, I beseech you. I tell you the mind of man and falshood have a wonderful sympathy.

sympathy. If you have a truth to deliver, wrap it up in fables, and it takes much better. And if you have a mind to be telling stories, you may divert extremely, without a syllable of truth, expressed or implied. Thus, you see, truth is forced to borrow the habit of falshood, that it may find an agreeable reception in the mind of man; but falshood enters boldly in its own proper person, because it is the place of its nativity, and its usual abode, whereas truth is but a stranger there. I will tell you more----suppose I had cracked my brains with inventing allegorical fables, the greatest part of my readers would perhaps have chopped upon the fable, and run away with it, without looking any further than the literal sense, and so left my allegory in the lurch. And I must tell you too, that in effect my deities, such as they are, and all mysteries apart, have not been thought so ridiculous neither.

Aesop. Bless me! why, you make me sweat; I am in a terrible fear all of a sudden, lest people should take me at my word, and believe that the beasts talked as they are represented in my fables.

Homer. A pleasant fear that! .

Aesop. Why, if it agrees with their faith, to think the gods might hold such discourses as you have represented of them; what reason is there they should not believe too, that beasts may talk together, in the manner I made them talk?

Homer. Alas! the case is quite different. Men, it seems, are well enough pleased that their gods should be as great fools as themselves; but by no means that the beasts should be thought as wise.

DIALOGUE VI.

ATHENAI8 and ICASIA.

I C A S I A.

SINCE you have a curiosity to know that adventure of mine, I will tell you. The emperor, in whose reign I lived, had an inclination to marry; and that he might the better make choice of an empress to his mind, he issued out his proclamation, that all, who thought themselves furnished with beauty and merit enough to pretend to a throne, should meet at Constantinople. God knows what infinite crouds there were! I had the vanity to go among the rest, in confidence that the charms of my youth and of my eyes, which were very sparkling, together with an air agreeable and engaging enough, would give me at least a fair chance for the empire. Well—election-day was come, and when all the beautiful candidates were assembled, every one was busy in examining the faces of all the rest, with spite enough, you may be sure. And for my part it flattered my pride extremely, to observe what four ill-favoured glances I had from my rivals. The emperor appeared, and passed by several rows of Belles without speaking a word: but when he came to me, my eyes plaid their parts, and stopped his progress. Then regarding me with an air as languishing as I could wish, *In truth*, says he, *women are dangerous creatures, and can do a world of mischief.*

Now courage, thought I, and a little repartee, and the day is my own; so amidst the confusion of hope and joy that I was in, I made a shift to reply
----*Sir, as dangerous as women are, they can make reparation for that mischief, and have sometimes done a world of good.* This answer of mine ruined all, for the emperor thought it so witty, that he durst as well be hanged as venture upon me.

Athen. That emperor was certainly very fantastical to be so scared at a little wit, and an innocent into the bargain, to think your answer discovered much---for, if I may be so free with you, there was nothing in it, and you need not let your wit ly heavy upon your conscience.

Ica. Yet these are the cross purposes of fortune. Your wit alone made you an empress, the bare suspicion of wit hindered me from being one: you were a philosopher too, which is ten times worse; yet nothing of this could spoil your match with the younger Theodosius.

Athen. I should have been in a panic fear, though, if I had had such an example as your's before my eyes. My father (I thank him) after he had accomplished me in wit and learning, disinherited me, and told me I had a very fair fortune in my hands, and need not doubt of preferment, and to say truth I thought so too. But I am convinced now that I run the greatest risque in the world, and that it was a hundred to one I had been left with nothing but my philosophy to keep me.

Ica. To see now how one is puzzled in following examples; it would be a very good jest, if upon such an occasion as mine, some other per-

sons, who have read my story, and are willing to edify by it, should very cunningly conceal their wit, and be laughed at for fools.

Athen. I would not lay wagers of their success, if they played the fool with design; though it often happens, when we do not think on it, that we commit the luckiest follies in the world. Did you never hear of the painter that drew grapes so much to the life that the birds came and pecked at them? Imagine how he was admired for it. But it seems there was a boy drawn too carrying the grapes; and one made this shrewd remark to the painter, that indeed the fruit must needs be very well, because it drew the birds to it; but the boy was done as ill, that could not fright them away. It was true enough; and yet if the painter had not lost himself as he did when he drew the boy, the grapes had never had that prodigious success.

Ica. In short, though all are obliged to be doing something in the world, yet we find no body knows what they are about. And the painter's example is enough to fill us with scruples, even in affairs in which we have conducted ourselves ever so well, and to make us doubt whether some fault, that we have shunned, might not better have been committed. So uncertain is every thing, and it looks as if fortune took pains to give contrary events to the same thing, to make herself sport with the reason of mankind, which has no certain rule for its direction.

DIALOGUE VII.

EROSTRATUS and DEMETRIUS PHALEREUS.

EROSTRATUS.

THREE hundred and sixty statues erected in Athens to your honour!-----It is very much

Demetr. I got the government into my hands, and after that it was no difficult matter, you may believe, to make the people compliment me with statues.

Eroft. And you were transported, I warrant, to think you had thus multiplied yourself three hundred and sixty times, and that you met with nothing but your dear self throughout a whole city?

Demetr. I own it: but alas! it was a joy of a very short duration; the face of affairs soon altered, and in a day's time not one of my statues was left standing: they were all beaten down, and broke to pieces.

Eroft. A terrible reverse of fortune! and pray who performed this noble exploit?

Demetr. It was Demetrius Poliorcetes, (a shame take him!) the son of Antigonus.

Eroft. Would to heaven I had been in his place! I swear it was infinite pleasure to destroy such a vast number of statues made for one man.

Demetr. Such a brutal wish becomes none but him that fired the temple at Ephesus----I see you preserve your old character.

Eroft. I have been upbraided sufficiently with

my burning that temple ; all Greece made a noise about it : but it is a sad thing, in earnest, that men should be so beside their senses.

Demetr. You had best complain of the injustice they have done you in detesting so brave an action, and of the rigour of that law by which the Ephesians forbade any body to mention the very name of Erostratus.

Eroft. Hold there-----I have no reason at all to complain of that. The Ephesians were a company of dull honest wretches, that had not the brains to foresee, that to forbid the pronouncing of a name, was the certain way to make it immortal. But what ground was there for this law ? I had an extravagant desire, forsooth, to be talked of, and so I fired their temple ; well, and what then ?----They ought to have drawn up an address of thanks to me, that my ambition cost them no more ; they could not have come off cheaper ; another in my place would have pulled ye their city about their ears, and destroyed state and all.

Demetr. To hear you, a man would swear you had a right to lay about you like a fury, and spare nothing in your way, that might make you be talked of. And that all the mischiefs you forbore ought to be reckoned as so many acts of grace, and instances of your generosity.

Eroft. Why, I will make it as plain as can be that I had a right to burn the temple of Ephesus. Pray what do ye think it was built for, with so much art and magnificence ? Was it not the design of the architect to perpetuate his name ?

Demetr. Very likely.

Eroft. Well----and it was to perpetuate my name that I reduced this fine structure to ashes.

Demetr. A solid argument! and do ye think then, that for the sake of your glory you may lawfully destroy the works of another?

Eroft. Lawfully?---yes.---Vanity which had erected this temple by the hands of another man, has been able, you see, to ruin it by mine; and vanity has a natural right over all human works whatever. It is she has made them all, and can unmake them again when she pleases. Nor ought the greatest states to murmur at their being subverted by her, if she finds but her account in it, since they cannot pretend to any original independent of vanity. Suppose, for example, some king should have a whim to honour the funerals of his horse by causing the town Bucephalia to be raised to the ground; would this be an injustice to it? Not the least, in my opinion; for the place had never been built, but to preserve the memory of Bucephalus, and its very being is appropriated to the honour of horses.

Demetr. So then, at this rate, there is nothing secure; not men themselves, for ought I see.

Eroft. True----vanity sports herself with their lives, as well as with the rest of the universe; a father leaves as many brats as he can get, to keep up his name; a conqueror, to perpetuate his, destroys as many men as he is able.

Demetr. I do not wonder to hear Erostratus muster up all his arguments in defence of destroyers. But when all is said, if to demolish the monuments of another's glory, be one way to esta-

blish our own, I am sure it is of all ways the most ignoble.

Eroft. I cannot tell that; but let it be as ignoble a way as it will, there is a necessity some should take it.

Demetr. Necessity?

Eroft. Yes. The earth is like a huge table-book, in which every one is fond of writing his name. Now when the book is full, some of the names must be rubbed out, to make room for new: if all the monuments of the ancients stood to this day, the world would be quite choked up with them, and the moderns would have no room left for theirs. How could you be such a silly oaf as to flatter yourself that your three hundred and sixty statues should keep their pedestals long? Do not you see now, if you have any conscience, that your glory took up too much place?

Demetr. But what a pitiful vengeance was that of Demetrius Poliorcetes! when once my statues were up, a body would think he had even as good have let them alone.

Eroft. Right! and before that, had not you even as good have let all alone, and never have set them up? It is these passions do and undo every thing, and make all the bustle in the world. You would have nothing done upon earth, if reason governed all. Pilots, they say, are most afraid of those calm seas where they cannot make sail, but are desirous of a wind, though with the hazard of a tempest. Thus passions among men are the winds that are necessary to give all things mo-

tion, though at the same time they occasion many a hurricane.

DIALOGUE VIII.

CALLIRHEA and PAULINA.

PAULINA.

WELL, for my part, I am of opinion that a woman is in bodily danger from the first moment she is passionately beloved. What tricks will not an ardent lover contrive to compass his ends? I had a long time resisted the importunity of Mundus, though he was a gallant young Roman, and exceeding handsome; but when prayers and tears could not prevail, he got the victory by a stratagem. I was a mighty devotee to the god Anubis: the priestess of this god comes and tells me one day that the deity was enamoured with me, and required me to meet him in his temple. The mistress of Anubis!---you may judge how proud I was of that honour; I was punctual to the assignation, and was received with sufficient demonstrations of tenderness. Now to tell you the truth, this Anubis proved to be Mundus. But alas, how could I resist? Some women, they say, have granted the favour to gods in the shape of men, and sometimes of beasts. I am sure there is more reason to yield to men in the shape of gods.

Call. Why really the men have a world of tricks; I am sure I may say so by experience, for I had just such another put upon me. I was a

Trojan lass, and upon the point of matrimony, when, according to the custom of the place, I went attended with a numerous train, and tricked up in all my best, to offer my virginity, forsooth, to the river Scamander. As soon as I made him the compliment, out comes Scamander from among the rushes, and takes me at my word. I thought it a mighty honour, I assure you, and so did every one besides, not excepting my dear spouse that was to be. All were held in a most respectful silence. My companions secretly envied my happiness, and Scamander withdrew into his rushes again when he thought it was time. But how was I surprized when I met this Scamander afterward in a little village, and came to know that he was an Athenian admiral who had a squadron of ships upon that coast!

Paul. What! you thought it was Scamander himself then?

Call. Yes; do ye question it?

Paul. And was it the custom, I pray, in your country for the river to accept the offers which the maids that were going to be married made to him?

Call. No; perhaps if it had, they would not have been made. The river was modestly content with the civility they expressed for him, and did not abuse it.

Paul. You ought then to have been very suspicious of your Scamander.

Call. Why so? Might not a young virgin imagine that all who went before had not beauty enough to please the god? or that they only mocked him with false offers, which he did not think

worth his notice? It is natural for women to flatter themselves. But you that are so severe upon me for being tricked by Scamander, were yourself tricked by Anubis.

Paul. Not so much tricked neither. I had some small suspicions that Anubis might be a simple mortal.

Call. And yet you went to meet him!-----Why, this is inexcusable.

Paul. What would you have? I had heard it was affirmed by all the wise, that if we did not favour our own deception, we should taste very little pleasure.

Call. Very good! favour our own deception! ---but probably they did not understand it in that sense. Their meaning was, that the most agreeable objects in the world are at the bottom so slight, that they would scarce affect us at all, if we made the least serious reflections on them. Pleasures are not formed for severe examination, and we are continually forced to help them out in many things, about which it would be foolish to make ourselves scrupulous. This is what the wise you mentioned-----

Paul. And this is what I would say too: had I been scrupulous in the case of Anubis, I had quickly found he was no god; but I took his divinity upon trust, not caring to examine that matter too curiously. And where is the lover whose passion we should admit, if it were first to pass the test of our reason?

Call. Mine was not so strict; a lover might have been found, whom my reason would have

allowed me to love; and in short, we can easier believe ourselves courted by a sincere and faithful man, than by a god.

Paul. In earnest it is almost the same. I should just as soon have been persuaded that Mundus was a god, as that he was faithful and constant.

Call. Fy!-----there is nothing more extravagant than what you say. If one could believe that gods may be in love, yet no body can think this happens often. But frequent instances have been known of faithful lovers who never divided their hearts, but sacrificed all to their mistresses.

Paul. If you take the lover's cares, his officious sacrifices, and entire preference of his mistress, for true marks of fidelity, then I confess you may find faithful lovers enough. But this is not my way of reckoning; I strike out of the list all those whose passion has not been long enough to have had the leisure to extinguish itself, nor happy enough to have had cause for it; and I retain only those who have held good in spite of time and in spite of favours; and they are pretty near the same number with the gods that have fallen in love with mortals.

Call. Still there must be some fidelity found, even according to this notion. For let a man tell a woman he is a god captivated by her merit, she laughs in his face; let him swear to be faithful, she believes him presently. And what is the reason for this difference, but only that there are examples of the latter, and not one of the former?

Paul. As for examples, I believe the thing is
upon

upon a level. But the reason why we yield not to the deception of taking a man for a god is, because it is not encouraged by the heart. A woman can never be persuaded that her lover is a deity, because she does not desire he should be one; but she wishes him faithful, and therefore believes him so.

Call. You jest, sure; what! all women, I warrant, would take their lovers for gods, if they wished them such?

Paul. I dare swear they would;----if this error had been necessary in love, nature would certainly have disposed our heart to inspire it. The heart is the source of all the errors we have occasion for, and in this matter denies us nothing.

DIALOGUE IX.

CANDAULUS and GYGES.

CANDAULUS.

THE more I think on it, the more I am convinced of it, there was no necessity you should have murdered me.

Gyges. What could I do? the next day after you had given me a view of the queen's secret beauties, she sent for me, and telling me she had discovered that you brought me the night before into her chamber, made me a fine speech upon the injury done to her modesty, in conclusion of which she told me I must prepare to die, or to kill you and marry her out of hand; for she pre-

tended, her honour required either that I should enjoy what I had seen, or be put out of capacity of boasting the sight. I understood her meaning: the injury was not so great but she might have dissembled it, and her honour might have let you live, if she had pleased; but to be free, she was surfeited with you, and was overjoyed with a pretext of glory to get rid of her husband. Now you must grant me, that, of the alternative she proposed, I had but one way to chuse.

Cand. I am violently afraid you were more charmed with her, than she was surfeited with me: what an inconsiderate fool was I, that did not foresee the effects of her beauty upon you, but took you for an honest man than you proved!

Gyges. Rather blame yourself for having been so much transported with the pleasure of being husband to a fine woman, that you could not keep the secret.

Cand. Then I should blame myself for the most natural thing in the world. It is impossible in extreme happiness to conceal one's joy.

Gyges. In the happiness of a lover it would be excusable, but your's was that of a husband. To be indiscreet for a mistress is no strange thing, but for a wife!-----And what delicious notions would people have of marriage, if they were to form a judgment of it by what you did!

Cand. But seriously, do you believe we can be satisfied with a felicity no body is witness to? The bravest men desire spectators of their bravery, and those who are happy would be looked upon as such, to perfect their happiness. Nay, how do I

know but they would choose to have it less, provided it might appear more? It is certain, we never make a shew of our good fortune, without a kind of insult over others, in which we feel a mighty satisfaction.

Gyges. According to your notions, it would be very easy to revenge this insult. A man need but shut his eyes, and refuse to others these regards, or if you please these sentiments of emulation, which make part of their happiness.

Cand. I agree with you. I heard one of the dead the other day, who had been king of Persia, relating a story to this purpose. He was carried captive in chains through the metropolis of a great empire. The victorious emperor, attended with all his court, was seated on a magnificent and lofty throne: the place was filled with infinite crouds of people, and adorned with the utmost care: never was a more pompous spectacle. When the king appeared in the rear of a long procession of captives and spoils, he made a stop just over-against the emperor, and cried out with an air of gayety-----*Folly! folly! all is folly!*-----These few words, he affirmed, quite spoiled the emperor's triumph; and I am so sensible of it, that I believe I should scarce have been willing to triumph, on the same terms, over my most formidable enemies.

Gyges. Then you would not have loved the queen any longer if I had not thought her handsome, but had cried out, when I saw her,-----*Folly, folly.*

Cand. I must confess it would have cruelly mor-

tified my husbandly pride. Now you may judge by this that the love of a beautiful woman must flatter a man very sensibly, and that discretion is a most difficult virtue.

Gyges. Hark ye----- (though I am dead myself, I will not say this to another of the dead, but in his ear) there is no such matter of vanity to be drawn from the love of a mistress. Nature has so well established the commerce of love, that merit has not very much to do. For every heart she has provided some other heart, and has not taken care always to rank together persons worthy of esteem. This is a very mixed affair, and experience makes it but too plain that the choice of a fine woman argues little or nothing in favour of the man on whom it lights. Now these reasons, in my opinion, should make lovers discreet.

Cand. I dare assure you, the women do not desire any such discretion as is only founded upon the principle of taking but little pride in their love.

Gyges. Is it not sufficient that a man takes extreme pleasure in it? What I would withdraw from vanity, should be added to tenderness.

Cand. No-----they would not agree to it.

Gyges. But be pleased to consider, that when pride enters into the affair of love, it spoils all. The pride of the women is first contrary to the interest of their lovers, and afterwards out of the ruins of this pride their lovers compose another which is quite contrary to the interest of the women. And this is the consequence of placing pride where it ought not to be.

DIALOGUE X.

HELEN and FULVIA.

HELEN.

I MUST needs be satisfied in one thing which I was lately told here by Augustus. Is it true, Fulvia, that you entertained a small inclination for him, and that, because he made no returns to it, you provoked Marc Antony your husband to raise a war against him?

Fulvia. Nothing is more true, my dear Helen! for among us dead this confession has no consequences. Marc Antony was in love with Cithirida the player, and I would fain have had my revenge by making Augustus love me. But alas! Augustus was too nice: I happened to be a little of the oldest, and not handsome enough; and though I gave him to understand that for his slighting me he had drawn upon himself a civil war, I could not work him into the least complaisance. I do not care if I repeat to you some verses he made upon the occasion, though I confess they were not much to my credit. They are these-----

*While from his spouse the false Antonius flies,
And dotes on soft Glaphira's brighter eyes,*

(For Glaphira you must know is the player's poetical name——)

Fulvia provok'd her female arts prepares,
 Reprisals seeks, and spreads for me her snares :
 The husband's false----but why must I endure
 This nauseous plague? and her revenge procure?
 What tho' she ask?----how blessed were my doom,
 Should all the discontented wives of Rome
 Repair in crouds to me, when scorn'd at home! }
 'Tis war, she says, if I refuse her charms :
 Let's think---she's ugly---Trumpets, sound to arms!

Helen. Then you and I occasioned the two greatest wars that perhaps ever happened; you that of Antony and Augustus, and I that of Troy.

Fulvia. But with this difference, that you caused the war of Troy by your beauty, and I that of Augustus and Antony by my deformity.

Helen. But to balance that, you have one advantage over me; for your's was certainly a much pleasanter war than mine. My husband revenges the affront put upon him by another's loving me, which is natural enough; your's revenges the affront put upon you by another's not loving you: and that, I think, is a new air in a husband!

Fulvia. True. But Antony did not know he made war for me, as your husband knew he did for you; which is a piece of folly that can never be forgiven him. For instead of Menelaus's marching with all Greece at his heels, and besieging Troy for ten years to force you from the arms of Paris, is it not as plain as can be, that if Paris would have resigned you for ever, Menelaus ought to have sustained a ten year's siege in Sparta rather than have received you? In earnest, I think they

were all out of their wits, both Greeks and Trojans. The first were mad for demanding you, and the others yet madder for keeping you. How, in the name of wonder, could so many men of worth sacrifice themselves to the pleasures of an inconsiderate young rake? I could not forbear laughing when I read that passage in Homer, where, after nine years war, and a late battle in which a world of men were lost, a council is held before Priam's palace. There Antenor is for resigning you, and there was nothing, that I can see, to be opposed to it. They ought only to have cursed their folly for not thinking of it sooner. However, Paris is pleased to signify that he does by no means approve the proposal. And Priam, who, if you will take Homer's word for it, is a match for the gods in wisdom, being in a mighty perplexity to find his council divided upon so curious a question, and not able to resolve which part to take, gives orders that they should all adjourn, and be gone to supper.

Helen. There is one good thing at least in the Trojan war, and that is, the ridiculous in it easily discovers itself. But the civil war between Augustus and Antony does not appear what it is. When so many of the Roman eagles were seen together in the field, people little imagined that the cause, which so cruelly animated them against one another, was Augustus's having coldly refused you the favour.

Fulvia. Thus goes the world. We see very great movements in it, but their springs are often ridiculous enough. It is very necessary for the

honour of the most considerable events, that the causes of them should be concealed.

D I A L O G U E XI.

PARMENISCUS and THEOCRITUS of Chios.

T H E O C R I T U S.

AND was you really never able to laugh, after you had descended into Trophonius's cave *?

* In this dialogue monsieur Fontenelle mentions the cave of Trophonius; but because he has not explained the story, and it seems very necessary that every one should know it, in order to discern the beauty of the sentiments which allude to it, the translator takes leave to prefix a short account of it here.

Trophonius was the son of Apollo, and had a temple erected in honour of him, within a wood near Labadia, a town in Boeotia, where, by the help of the priests, he became famous for giving oracles by dreams. The place, and the ceremonies belonging to it, had something particularly fantastical; whoever came to enquire his fate was first obliged for several days to pass through a long formality of charms, ablutions, expiations, and sacrifices. The priests inspected the entrails of beasts, to see whether he might be admitted to audience, or no: if they thought fit to admit him, he was washed, drank of two springs, was anointed with oil, brought to worship the statue of Trophonius, then dressed in a linen garment, and let to a mountain inclosed with walls of white marble, on which were several brass obelisks. Within was a cave like the mouth of an oven, through which he descended by a ladder. Here he was obliged to take in each hand a cake of honey as a charm for his security; he laid himself on the ground, and was suddenly dragged by the feet, he knew not how, through another little cave, where he was to receive the oracle in a trance. To conclude, he was dragged

Parmen. Never: I grew wonderfully serious.

Theocr. If I had known the cave had that virtue, I ought to have made a small journey thither! I had the ill luck to laugh too much all my time, and to pay for it too; for my life might have been longer if I had laughed less. I may thank an unhappy jest for dispatching me hither. King Antigonus had but one eye, and I had grievously offended him; however, he promised to pass it all by, if I would but appear before him. I was dragged along in a manner by the importunity of my friends; who, for my encouragement, said to me, *Never fear, the king will forgive you; and the minute you present yourself before his eyes, your life is out of danger. Then farewell to you,* said I, *for if I am not pardoned until I appear before his eyes, I am lost for ever.* Now Antigonus, who was disposed to forgive my crime, could not forgive my sarcasm, and so I lost my head for being merry out of season.

Parmen. I do not know whether I should not

out again the same way; some ceremonies passed to restore him to his senses, as placing him in the chair of the goddess of memory, and so the farce ended. But what is particularly to be remarked here, is, that it was said those who went into this cave lost, for a time, the power of laughing; an opinion occasioned by the mysteriousness of the solemnity, in which nothing was omitted that could fill a weak mind with all the ideas of fear and superstition.

Those who have a curiosity to read a more particular account of this, may find it at large in Van Dale's book de Oraculis, where he has admirably described the private avenues and communication of the vaults, and unravelled the whole management of this imposture.

have been glad with your burlesque humour, even at the price you mention.

Theocr. And for me, what would I have given to have had your seriousness!

Parmen. Ah! you little think what you wish for. I thought that seriousness would have been the death of me. Nothing could divert me. I did all I could to force a laugh, but in vain. Of all the ridiculous that the world affords, I had not the least enjoyment, for to me it was downright sadness. In short, I was almost distracted with my sable wisdom, when I went and prayed the Delphic god to teach me some means to laugh. He sends me in ambiguous terms to the *maternal power*; I thought he meant my country, and so I posted back thither, yet that could not relieve me. I began to think my distemper incurable, when by chance I made a journey to Delos. There I viewed with admiration the magnificence of Apollo's temples, and the beauty of his statues. The god appeared every where in shining marble or gold, and by the hand of the greatest masters of Greece. But I happened at last upon a Latona in wood, wretchedly carved, and with the haggish air of an ugly old woman; and here I could not hold from laughing, and very heartily too, at the difference between the mother and the son. But you cannot imagine how I was surprized and ravished to think I had laughed, and then I understood the true sense of the oracle. To conclude, I had no offerings to spare for the gold or marble Apollo's; the wooden Latona had all my devotion. I cannot tell you how often I sacrificed to her, I be-

smoked her over and over with incense; and if I could have born the expence, I had certainly built and consecrated a temple *TO LATONA THAT PROVOKES LAUGHTER*.

Theocr. I should think Apollo might have afforded you the power of laughing, much easier than at his mother's expence. You might have seen objects enough, as proper for that, as the wooden Latona.

Parmen. When we are out of humour, we find that men are not even worth the pains of laughing at. They were made to be ridiculous, and if they are so, pray where is the wonder? But a goddess that is pleased to be so, is something extraordinary. Apollo would probably convince me too, that my malady was not to be reached by all the force of human art, and that in this extremity I needed the assistance of the deities.

Theocr. Yet this mirth and gayety you so passionately desired, is the much greater evil. A whole nation was once possessed with it, and payed for it too, sufficiently.

Parmen. How? a whole nation too much disposed to mirth and gayety?

Theocr. Yes. It was the Tirthians.

Parmen. Happy people!

Theocr. Happy?----Let me tell you, they were so incapable of seriousness, even upon the most weighty occasions, that every thing fell into the utmost confusion. If they assembled in public; instead of settling the state, their whole discourse was buffoonery. If they gave audience to ambassadors, they grinned in their faces. If they

held councils, the speeches of the gravest senators were all farce. And whatever was the matter in hand, one reasonable syllable, or a wise action, was a prodigy with them. In short, as great fools as they were, they found the plague of this droll disposition, as much at least as you did of your sadness; and to Delphos they went as well as you, but with a quite different prayer, *viz.* to know how they should recover a decent gravity. The oracle answered, if they could sacrifice a bull to Neptune without laughing, it should be afterwards in their power to become wiser. A sacrifice, you will own, is at all times no merry business; yet even for this, they had a world of preparatives to make it more serious. They resolved to admit no young people to it, nor all sorts of old neither; but such only as were loaded with diseases, or debts, or plagued with bad wives. When this choice company was mustered upon the shore to solemnize the sacrifice, notwithstanding the wives, the debts, the diseases, and age itself, they still stood in need of other helps, and were forced to take a world of pains to set their countenances, to rivet their eyes to the ground, to knit their brows, and bite their lips: but as ill luck would have it, there was a little boy crept among the croud, and as they were driving him away according to order, *Lord help ye, says the child, do ye think I will swallow your bull?* This foolery ruined all, and undid the charm of so many formal grimaces. They burst into a mighty laugh, the sacrifice was disturbed, and the Tirinthians remained as great idiots as before. But certainly they were to blame,
after

after their bull failed them, that they did not think of this cave of Trophonius, which had the wonderful virtue of making people so serious, and produced so remarkable a change in you.

Parmen. Shall I tell you truly now? I actually went into Trophonius's cave; and yet Trophonius's cave, which struck me with such a melancholy, is quite another sort of business.

Theocr. What is it then?

Parmen. It is *reflections*. I had made some, and I never laughed afterward. If the oracle had prescribed that specific, the Tirinthians had been soon cured of their jollity.

Theocr. I must own I do not well understand what reflections are, but I cannot imagine why they should be so chagrin. Is it impossible to have any right views, but what at the same time must be dismal? Is error only privileged to be gay, and is reason made but to torture and destroy us?

Parmen. By what appears, it is not nature's intention that we should think too refinedly, because she sells these thoughts at so dear a rate! You are for making reflections, says she; but beware!-----I will have my revenge, by the sadness they shall give you.

Theocr. But you do not tell me why nature would not have us pursue reflections as far as they will go?

Parmen. She has sent men into the world to live in it; and to live, is to be for the most part of our time wholly ignorant of what we are doing. When we discover the little importance of all that employs or touches us, we rob nature of

her secret; we are wise over-much, and retain too little of man; we think, and we cease from action. And this is what nature disallows.

Theocr. But the same reason, which helps you to think finer than others, condemns you however to act like them.

Parmen. You say right: there is a reason that sets us above all things by thoughts, and there must be another that brings us back to all again by actions. But then, even at this rate, were it not almost as much to the purpose not to have thought at all?

D I A L O G U E XII.

MARCUS BRUTUS and FAUSTINA.

M. B R U T U S.

HOW!-----Is it possible that you took pleasure in acting a thousand infidelities against the emperor Marcus Aurelius, a husband that had all the complaisance in the world for you, and who, without dispute, was the very best man in the Roman empire?

Faust. And is it possible, that you assassinated so mild and moderate an emperor, as Julius Caesar?

M. Brutus. I meant to terrify all usurpers by the example of Caesar, since his mildness and moderation could not make him secure.

Faust. And suppose I should tell you, I meant to frighten all husbands, that no body should

dare to think of being one, after the example of Marcus Aurelius, whose kindness was so ill repayed?

M. Brutus. A very fine design, that!----There is a necessity there should be husbands; for, who should govern the women, I pray?----But Rome had no occasion of being governed by Caesar.

Faust. Who told you so? Rome began to have as odd fancies and humours as are charged upon the greater part of women. She could not live longer without any master at all, nor yet could she bear to have but one. Women are exactly of the same character; and it must be granted too, that the men are too jealous of their sovereignty: they exercise it in marriage, and that is a great deal, and they would exercise it in love too. When they require a mistress should be faithful, they mean, a slave. The dominion ought to be equally divided between the lover and his mistress, and yet it always passes from one side, and generally from the side of the lover.

M. Brutus. You shew yourself a notorious rebel here, against our whole sex.

Faust. I am a Roman, and I have Roman sentiments of liberty.

M. Brutus. At this rate I can assure you the world is full of Romans. But will you be pleased to own that Romans, like me, are somewhat more rare?

Faust. So much the better. I believe no honest man would have done what you did, when you stabbed your benefactor.

M. Brutus. Nor do I believe any honest wo-

man would have imitated your conduct. As for mine, you cannot deny that there was firmness of mind in it. It required a good deal of courage, to stand proof against the friendship which Caesar had for me.

Faust. And do ye think it required less courage to stand proof against the good-nature and patience of Marcus Aurelius? He saw, with unconcern, all the infidelities I played him. He would not do me the honour to be jealous, and he disappointed me of the pleasure of cheating him. I was so enraged, that I had almost a mind sometimes to turn honest, yet I made a shift always to preserve myself from that weakness. And even after my death, did not Marcus Aurelius affront me with building temples, giving me priests, and instituting in my honour the Faustinian feasts? And is not this very provoking, to persecute my memory with an *apotheosis*? to erect me into a goddess?

M. Brutus. Well, I own I have no notion of woman! Were ever such fantastical complaints heard of?

Faust. Why?---would not you rather have been obliged to conspire against Sylla, than against Caesar? Sylla might have provoked your indignation and hatred to the highest degree, by his extravagant cruelty. So should I have been much better pleased to have put the trick upon a jealous man, as Caesar for example, whom we were talking of. He was possessed with such an insupportable vanity, that nothing would content him unless he had the empire of the whole earth to himself, and his

wife to himself too; and because he saw Clodius shared one with him, and Pompey the other, he could neither bear Pompey nor Clodius. Oh how happy should I have been with Caesar!

M. Brutus. It was but this moment you were for exterminating all husbands, and now you are for chusing the very worst!

Faust. I am for having none at all; that so women might be perpetually free. But if there must be some, why then, the worse the better, in my judgment, for the sake of the pleasure there is in recovering one's liberty.

M. Brutus. And I think it most necessary for women of your temper, that there should be husbands. The sentiment of liberty is always more lively, the more it is mingled with spite.

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D I A L O G U E I.

AUGUSTUS and PETER ARETIN.

P E T E R A R E T I N.

Y E S, I was a wit in my time, I assure you, and raised myself a considerable fortune among princes.

Aug. You composed many works in honour of them?

P. Are. Not a syllable; I had a pension from all the princes of Europe, which had been impossible, if I had fooled away my time in scribbling panegyrics. They were all at war together, the consequence of which is, that when one side beats, the other is beaten; and how should I praise them all together?

Aug. What was it you did then?

P. Are. Lampoon them----They could not all be put into a panegyric, but into a satire they might. In short, I had so spread abroad the terror of my name, that they were glad to pay me

tribute, to purchase the liberty of playing the fool in quiet. The emperor Charles V. (of whom you must needs have heard here below) could not be at rest until he went and got himself well beaten upon the coast of Africa, and immediately after sends me a fine chain of gold. I took it, but with a sullen look;----*What a pitiful trifle is here, said I, for so great a folly as he has committed!*

Aug. A very new way this, that you invented, to draw money from princes!

P. Are. Had I not all the reason in the world to expect a vast fortune, by establishing myself a revenue upon folly? a fund, which, let me tell you, can never be exhausted.

Aug. Yet when you have said all, praising is the surest trade, and consequently the best.

P. Are. What do ye mean?----I had not impudence enough.

Aug. And yet you had impudence enough to make satires upon crowned heads?

P. Are. Under favour, that is a different case. In the business of satire there is no necessity you should always despise the person you write against, but only lash him; whereas, in offering fustian praises, I think one cannot avoid having mean thoughts of the persons they are put upon, and taking them in one's heart for downright bubbles. I wonder with what face Virgil could tell you it was a matter in debate, what place you would accept of among the gods; whether you would be pleased to take upon you the charge of the earth, or become a god of the sea, by espousing one of the daughters of Thetis, who would willingly give

all her waters for the honour of your alliance? or, in fine, whether you would take up your apartment in heaven near the scorpion, who possessed two places, but upon your approach would contract his claws to make room for you?

Aug. You may spare your wonder about Virgil's face. People are not used to examine praises so rigorously; they can help out the letter, I warrant you, and the modesty of the addresser is sufficiently secured by the self-love of those to whom they are addressed. For it is as common a thing as can be to have people think they deserve praises which are not given them, and how then should they believe they do not deserve those that are?

P. Are. What! you will take Virgil's word for it then? and hope to marry a sea-nymph, or take up your quarters among the signs in the Zodiac?

Aug. No such fool neither. In praises of this kind we abate something to reduce them to a reasonable compass: but to confess freely, that abatement is but small, and we always take care to secure ourselves a good bargain. In short, in what extravagant manner soever we are praised, we have the benefit of thinking ourselves superior to common praise, and that it is purely our merit forces those who praise us to exceed all bounds. Alas! vanity has a thousand shifts.

P. Are. I am convinced that one need not make any difficulty of carrying praises to the highest excess; but for those at least that are contrary to one another, I wonder in my conscience

how any body can have the boldness to offer them to princes. I hold a wager now, for example, that if you had taken vengeance upon your enemies implacably, your whole court would have rung with acclamations, that nothing in the world was more glorious than to thunder down all that had the rashness to oppose you. And after this, when you had performed some action of great mildness, the tune had been changed, and then, vengeance!-----it is the appetite of beasts, and all the glory it carries is barbarous and inhuman! thus they would have praised one part of your life at the expence of the other. Now I should have been in a terrible fear that you would have turned the banter upon me, and caught me by my own words-----And that you would have said, *Chuse me now which you please, severity or clemency, to draw the true character of a hero upon; but when you have done, be sure you keep to your choice.*

Aug. Why will you have one make so severe a scrutiny? It is convenient for great persons, that all matters should be problems for flattery: whatever they do they cannot miss of praise; and if they are complimented upon contraries, it is because they have more than one sort of merit.

P. Are. Well, but had you never any scruple about all those elogies which were so unreasonably heaped on you? Or was there need of much refining, to perceive that they were only pinned upon your quality? Praises make no distinction of princes: the greatest heroes have no more to their share than others. But posterity is just, and makes

a difference between those that are given to different princes, by ratifying the one, and rejecting the other for vile flattery.

Aug. You must grant me then, at least, that I merited the praises I received, since it is certain posterity has confirmed them by its judgment. Though at the same time I have a quarrel against it too, because being accustomed to regard me as the model of princes, in praising them it has commonly compared them to me, and I have often suffered by the comparison.

P. Are. Take comfort, I beseech you; you are not like to have this cause of complaint long. If it be true what all the dead that come hither tell us of Louis XIV. now reigning in France, it is he will be looked on hereafter as the model of princes; and I foresee, that in future times the highest compliment that can be made them will be to compare them to this mighty prince.

Aug. Very fine! Do you think that those, who shall make them so extravagant a panegyric, will be heard with pleasure?

P. Are. It is very possible: men are so covetous of praise, that they can dispense with truth, justice, and every thing else that should season and qualify it.

Aug. It is plain then you are for abolishing all praises whatever. If only such must be allowed as are just, who do ye think will give them?

P. Are. All those who would praise without design, and such are the only proper persons. What gives such a value to your Virgil's admirable encomium of Cato, when he makes him pre-

side over the assembly of pious souls, who are separated from the rest in the Elysian Fields,----It is this----Cato was dead, and Virgil had no expectations from him, or any of his family----And what spoils all his praises of you in the beginning of his Georgics?---The pension he received from you.

Aug. Then have I thrown away a world of money upon praise!

P. Are. I am sorry for it. You should have done as one of your successors did, who, upon his coming to the empire, immediately forbid all persons, by an express edict, the liberty of making verses on him.

Aug. Alas! he was wiser than I; and I am sensible now that those are by no means the truest praises which they present to us, but those only which we extort from them.

D I A L O G U E II.

S A P P H O and L A U R A.

L A U R A.

IT is true that the amours we both have been engaged in have been accompanied by the muses, which rendered them very agreeable; but with this difference it seems, that whereas you made verses on your lovers, I had verses made on me by mine.

Sap. Very well! you would tell me I was as violent a lover as you were beloved.

Lau. That may be without a miracle. For I know our sex is generally more inclined to tenderness than the men. But what shocks me is this: you made no scruple of telling all your mind, and making such broad signs to those you had a kindness for!—In short, you openly invaded them with your poetry; whereas the woman's part is to be upon the defensive.

Sap. To be free with you, I was provoked at that impertinent custom. The men have abused us, and left us the hardest part; for it is much easier to attack than to defend.

Lau. Let us not complain, I beseech you; since our part has its advantages. The besieged, you know, may surrender at discretion, but the besiegers cannot carry the town when they please.

Sap. You might have said, on the other side, that when the men attack us, it is because they have an inclination to attack us. But when we defend, you know,—we have not over much inclination to it.

Lau. What, do you make nothing of the pleasure of observing from so many soft addresses, so long continued, and so often renewed, how very highly they value the conquest of your heart?

Sap. And do you make nothing of the pain of resisting these soft addresses? They see with pleasure how they succeed by the advances they make upon us. But as to our resistance, should that succeed, otherwise than we design, on my conscience it would break our hearts.

Lau. But however, though after a troublesome attendance, they have a right to be conquerors at last, yet you do them a favour in acknowledging them such. And though you cannot hold out any longer, yet even your weakness lays them under obligations.

Sap. But with your leave, for all that, a victory on their side is still a defeat on ours. All the pleasure they taste in being loved, is their triumph over the person that loves them; and a happy lover is only happy in this, that he is the conqueror.

Lau. What? would you have had a law then, that the women should attack the men?

Sap. What a pother you make about attacking and defending! one would think you were born in a siege. Why cannot they meet one another half way, and love upon the square?

Lau. Oh matters would be dispatched too soon by half, and love is so agreeable a commerce, that we should spin it out as long as we can. It were a jest indeed, if as soon as the question were put on one side, the other should be ready with a *Yes, I thank you!* then what becomes of all the solicitous endeavours of pleasing? of the inquietudes, and regret for not having pleased more? the officious ardour in seeking the happy moment? in a word, all that agreeable intercourse and mixture of pleasure and pain which makes the soul of an amour? For strip it of these, and there is nothing more insipid than plain love for love.

Sap. A fine story! if love must needs be a sort of combat, I would much rather put the men up-

on the guard. Did you not own that our sex has more disposition to tenderness? It follows then, they would attack better.

Lau. True; but the other would defend too well. And when it is affirmed that some resistance must be made on one side or the other, it is meant so much only as will relish the victory to those that attack, but by no means so much as to repel them. One should not be so weak as to surrender at first sight, nor so stout as not to surrender at all. This now is the proper character of our sex, and cannot so well agree to the men: and take my word for it, when we have reasoned and refined all we can, upon love, or any other matter, we shall find at the foot of the account, that things are much better as they are; and that in offering to mend them, we should spoil them utterly.

DIALOGUE III.

SOCRATES and MONTAIGNE.

MONTAIGNE.

IT is you then, divine Socrates! how I am transported to see you! I am but newly come in to these parts, and immediately upon my arrival I made it my business to find you out. In short, after having filled my book with your name and praises, I have now the happy opportunity of your

conversation, and of informing myself from you, by what means you became possessed of such a native virtue, the motions of which were all so unaffected, and which had no such example before it, even in that happy age in which you lived.

Socr. I am very well pleased to meet with one of the dead, that seems to have been a philosopher. But because you are lately come from above, and it is a long time since I have seen any person here, for they leave me lonely enough, and I have no crouds, I assure you, that press for my conversation, therefore give me leave to ask you what news? How goes the world? Is it not mightily changed?

Mont. Extremely; you would not know it.

Socr. I am ravished to hear it; I was always of opinion it must of necessity grow better and wiser, than it was in my days.

Mont. What do ye mean? Why it is ten times more foolish and corrupt than ever; that is the change I speak of; and I expected to hear from you the history of the times which you have seen, in which there reigned so much honesty and integrity.

Socr. On the contrary, I was prepared to hear wonders of the age, in which you have just finished your life. What! have not men by this time shaken off the follies of antiquity?

Mont. You are an antient yourself, and for that reason, I suppose, make so bold with antiquity: but be assured that mens manners are at present a large subject of lamentation, and that all things degenerate daily.

Socr. Is it possible? I thought in my time things went as perversely as could be, and was in hopes that at last they would fall into a more reasonable train-----and that men would have made their advantage of so many years experience.

Mont. Alas! What regard have they to experience? like silly birds, they suffer themselves to be taken in the same nets that have caught a hundred thousand of their kind already. There is not one but enters a perfect novice upon the stage of life; the follies of the fathers are all lost upon their children, and do not serve to instruct them at all.

Socr. But what is the reason of this? I should think that surely the world, in its old age, ought to become wiser and more regular than it was in its youth.

Mont. Mankind has, in all ages, the same inclinations, over which reason has not the least power. So that to the world's end there will be follies, and the same follies too, as long as there are men.

Socr. Then why would you put a greater value upon the ages of antiquity, than upon this present age?

Mont. Ah! Socrates! I know you to have a particular mastery in the art of reasoning, and to be able so ingeniously to beset those, with whom you dispute, with arguments whose consequences they do not foresee, that you can lead them whither you please. This is what may be called playing the midwife to their thoughts; I am sure I find myself delivered of a proposition directly opposite to what I had advanced, and yet I cannot give up

the controversy neither. It is certain we find not now any of those robust and vigorous souls of antiquity: shew me an Aristides, a Phocion, a Pericles, or to name one for all-----a Socrates.

Socr. Why, what hinders? Is it because nature is exhausted, and has not spirits left to produce such great souls-----If so, why is she yet exhausted in nothing else, but in reasonable men? None of her other works are degenerated, and how comes it then to pass that mankind is degenerated alone?

Mont. That they are degenerated is matter of fact: it appears to me as if nature had sometimes shewn such great men to the world, as patterns of what she could produce if she pleased, and after that formed all the rest with negligence enough.

Socr. Take care you are not deceived; antiquity is an object of a peculiar kind; its distance magnifies it: had you but known Aristides, Phocion, Pericles, and myself, since you are pleased to place me in the number, you would certainly have found some to match us in your own age. That which commonly possesses people so in favour of antiquity, is their being out of humour with their own times, and antiquity takes advantage of their spleen; they cry up the antients in spite to their contemporaries. Thus when we lived we esteemed our ancestors more than they deserved; and, in requital, our posterity esteem us at present more than we deserve. But yet our ancestors, and we, and our posterity, are all upon the level; and, I believe, the prospect of the world would be very dull and tiresome to any one that should

view it in a true light, because it is always the same.

Mont. I should have thought the world was always in motion, that every thing changed, and that ages, like men, had their different characters: and, in effect, do we not see that some ages are learned, and others illiterate; some barbarous, others polite; some serious, others whimsical; some ingenious, and others stupid?

Socr. True.

Mont. And consequently are not some more virtuous, and others more wicked?

Socr. That does not follow. Men change their habits, but not the form of their bodies, politeness, barbarism, learning or ignorance, more or less plainness, the grave genius or the buffoon; all these are no more than the dress, the outside of mankind; and these indeed are changed. But the heart, which is the man himself, does not change at all. People are ignorant in one age, but learning may come into fashion in the next. People are interested, but disinterest will never be the mode. Among the prodigious number of men irrational enough, that are born in a hundred years, nature produces, it may be, thirty or forty rational; and these, like a prudent administratrix, she is obliged to disperse through all the earth; and I leave you to judge, if they are like to be found in any place in numbers sufficient to bring virtue and integrity into fashion.

Mont. But is this distribution of rational men made with equality? Some ages, in all probabili-

ty, have been better used in the dividend than others.

Socr. Nature, without question, acts always with exact regularity, but we have not the skill to judge as she acts.

D I A L O G U E IV.

ADRIAN the emperor, and MARGARET of AUSTRIA.

MARGARET of AUSTRIA.

WHAT is the matter, I beseech you? I see you are in a heat.

Adri. I have just now been engaged in a fierce dispute with Cato of Utica, concerning the manner of our deaths; and I maintained that in this last scene I shewed more of a philosopher than he.

M. of Au. How! you had a world of assurance, upon my word, that you durst encounter a death so famous as his. Could any thing be more glorious than to order affairs with that wisdom in Utica, to make his friends secure, and then kill himself, that he might expire with the liberty of his country, and avoid falling into the hands of a conqueror, from whom he was yet certain to have received a pardon?

Adri. Oh! if you examine strictly, you will find there is enough to be objected to his death. In the first place, he was so long preparing for it, and with efforts so visible, that there was not a

man in Utica but knew that Cato was about to kill himself. Secondly, Before he durst venture upon the stroke, he was forced to read several times over Plato's dialogue concerning the immortality of the soul. Thirdly, This design had put him so out of humour, that being in bed, and missing his sword from under his pillow, for in suspicion of what he was about to do, his friends had removed it, he called one of his slaves to ask him for it, and gave the poor fellow such a blow on the face with his fist, that he broke his teeth, and brought back his hand all bloody.

M. of Au. It was an unlucky blow, I must own, and quite spoils this philosophical death.

Adri. You cannot imagine what a noise he made about the taking away his sword, and how he upbraided his sons and his domestics, that they intended to deliver him bound hand and foot to Caesar. In fine, he raved at them to that degree, that they were forced to be gone out of his chamber, and leave him to kill himself.

M. of Au. Truly there was no need of so much ado about the matter; he might have had patience till the next day, and then have effected it as he pleased. Nothing is easier than to pass out of the world when one is resolved to stay no longer in it. But it is probable the measures he took were so exactly proportioned to his constancy, that there was a necessity of killing himself just at that instant; and if he had deferred it but a day longer, perhaps he had not done it at all.

Adri. You say right, and, I perceive, know how to judge of a generous death.

M. of Au. But then they tell us, that after his sword was brought to him, and every body withdrawn, Cato fell fast asleep, and snored. This indeed looked very serene and handsome.

Adri. But do ye believe it? he had been bawling and tearing, and laying about him like a madman at his servants; and, after such a rough exercise, people do not use to fall asleep so serenely. Besides, the hand he struck the slave with pained him too much to let him sleep, for he could not bear the anguish of it, but had it bound up by a surgeon, though he was just upon the point of killing himself: in short, from the time they brought him his sword, until midnight, he read twice over Plato's dialogue. And then I could prove, by an entertainment he gave all his friends in the evening, by a walk he took afterward, and by all that passed until they left him alone in his chamber, that when they brought him his sword it was very late; besides, the dialogue he read is very long, and consequently he slept but little, if at all. In truth, I have a shrewd suspicion that he only snored with his eyes open, that he might have the honour of it, and to impose upon such as were listening at his chamber-door.

M. of Au. I think your criticisms upon his death are not amiss, which, however, has still remaining in it something very heroic. But upon what grounds can you pretend yours exceeds it? By all that I can remember you died in your bed, in a very plain manner, and not at all remarkable.

Adri. How!--Pray are not these verses remarkable, which I made just at my last breath?

Animula, vagula, blandula!
Hospes comesque corporis,
Quae nunc abibis in loca?
Pallidula, rigida, nudula,
Nec (ut soles) dabis joca.

My little soul! dost you yet know,
 Thou gentle flutt'ring fondling,
 To what places thou must go
 All naked, pallid, trembling?
 Where thou no more shalt joke and sing.

Cato entertained death too seriously; but, you see, I made a jest of it. And it is in this I pretend my philosophy went far beyond Cato's. It is not half so hard to bully death with fierceness, as carelessly to rally it; nor to receive it handsomely when we call it to our aid, as when it comes unsent for, and without our occasion for it.

M. of Au. I must own your death had a better grace than Cato's. But, by ill luck, I had never observed those verses in which all the beauty of it consists.

Adri. Why, that now is the humour of the world! Cato tore out his bowels, rather than he would fall into the hands of the enemy; this, perhaps, is no such mighty matter at the bottom. Yet such a passage looks very bright in the history, and every body is smitten with it. When another person makes his *exit* so easily, as to be in humour for composing jocular verses upon his death, it is more in reality than what Cato did; yet, because there is nothing in it that dazzles, history scarce makes any account of it.

M. of Au. Alas! there is nothing truer than what you say; I know it by experience. For I myself, who am talking with you at this instant, make pretences to a handsomer death than yours, which, however, has made less noise. I cannot say, indeed, it was an absolute death, but such as it is, it exceeds yours, which exceeds Cato's.

Adri. How!----what do ye mean?

M. of Au. I was an emperor's daughter, and was contracted to a king's son, who, after the death of his own father, very civilly sent me back to mine, in spite of his solemn promise to marry me. After that I was contracted to the son of another king; and, as I was going to my spouse by sea, the vessel which carried me was surprized in a prodigious storm, which put my life in extreme danger. In the midst of the tempest I made this epitaph for myself,

*The royal Margaret here is laid,
Who marry'd twice, yet dy'd a maid.*

Now to be plain with you, I did not die at that time, but that was not my fault. Do but imagine such a sort of death as this, and you will be satisfied Cato's constancy is irregular in one kind, and yours in another; but mine is all pure nature. He was too romantic, you had too much buffoonery, but I was reasonable.

Adri. What! you reproach me with having feared death too little?

M. of Au. I do-----It is not likely a man should be without any concern at his death; and I will pawn my soul that you put as great a force up-

on yourself to strain your jest, as Cato did to tear out his bowels. I expected every moment to be cast away, yet without terror, and I composed my epitaph in cool blood. This now is very extraordinary; and if there were no circumstances to qualify the story, there would be reason to reject it for a fable, or to think, at least, it was all a strain of ostentation. But let it be considered, that I was at the same time a poor young lady twice contracted, and yet had before my eyes the misfortune of dying a maid: I express my concern for it, and this gives an air of truth to my story, as much as you can demand. Now your verses, if you mind them, have no meaning; they are a mere jingle made up of little foolish expressions. But mine carry a clear sense, which gives satisfaction upon the first reading, and shews that nature speaks in them, more than in yours.

Adri. In good faith, I should never have thought that your melancholy, about carrying your virginity along with you, ought to be a matter of such glory to you.

M. of Au. Look you----you may rally upon it as you please; but my death, if it may properly be called so, has yet another essential advantage over Cato's and your's. You had both meddled with philosophy so much in your lives, that you were engaged, upon honour, not to be afraid of death; and if your fear might have been allowed you, I do not know how you would have behaved yourselves. But for me, as long as the storm lasted, I had a woman's right to tremble, and shriek until my cries reached heaven itself, and no

body could have found fault, or esteemed me the less for it. And yet, as I told you, I was so composed as to write my epitaph.

Adri. Hark ye---betwixt you and I, was it not writ ashore?

M. of Au. Pshaw---this criticising is the devil-----Did I serve you so about your verses?

Adri. Well, I will take them upon trust then---and I will yield you the point, that virtue is then greatest, when she does not exceed the bounds of nature.

D I A L O G U E V.

ERASISTRATUS and HARVEY.

ERASISTRATUS.

IN truth you inform me of very strange things here---How!---Does the blood circulate, say you? Do the veins carry it from the extreme parts of the body to the heart, and the heart discharge it into the arteries, which convey it back again to the extremities?

Har. I have given so many experimental proofs of this, that no body questions it any longer.

Erafi. Why then, it seems, we physicians of antiquity were strangely deceived, who fancied that the blood had only a very slow motion from the heart towards the extremities of the body; and the world is obliged to you for abolishing this ancient error.

Har. I think I have a right to pretend so, and

this obligation ought to be acknowledged the greater, in that I am the person who, by this means, have opened the way for all the curious discoveries which are made at present in anatomy. Since I have found out the circulation of the blood, it is now a matter of emulation who shall find out a new conveyance, a new canal, or a new reservoir: it appears as if the whole man were new cast. Behold then what advantages our modern art of physic has over yours! You undertook to cure the body of man, which at the same time you were utter strangers to.

Eraſi. I confess, the moderns are better naturalists than we, but not better physicians; we cured diseases as well as they. I wish I could have given all these gentlemen, and yourself in chief, prince Antiochus to cure of his quartan ague: you know, I suppose, what course I took; and how I discovered, by his pulse, which beat higher than ordinary in the presence of Stratonice, that he was desperately in love with that beautiful queen, and that his distemper was entirely caused by his violence upon himself in endeavouring to conceal his passion; yet I performed so difficult and considerable a cure as that, without knowing any thing of the blood's circulation: and I dare swear that you, with all the assistance of this knowledge, would have been sufficiently puzzled in my place, and have found an untoward piece of work on it. There was no occasion for new canals, or new reservoirs: the most necessary thing to be known in the patient was the heart.

Har. But, with submission, the heart is not al-

ways the matter to be considered, nor are all sick persons in love with their mothers-in-law, like Antiochus. I make no question but, for want of knowing that the blood circulates, you have let abundance of people die under your hands.

Erafi. You think then your modern discoveries of great use?

Har. Most certainly.

Erafi. Then, if you please answer me this small question---Why do we see as great numbers of the dead flock hither daily, as ever?

Har. Oh! that is their own fault, not the physicians.

Erafi. But this circulation, these pipes and canals, these reservatories---What! do all these fine things cure nothing?

Har. Perhaps the world has not had leisure yet to apply to particular uses what has been but newly discovered. However, it is impossible but that in time it will produce very great effects.

Erafi. No such revolutions, take my word for it. There is a certain measure of useful knowledge, which men attained early, which has received but small additions, and beyond which they shall never be able to advance much, if at all. Such is their obligation to nature, for having presented them so very easily with what was their greatest concern to know: for, indeed, they must have suffered extremely, if she had left the discovery of it to the slow researches of their reason. But other things, which are not of such necessity, open themselves by little and little, and in a long process of time.

Har. It would be strange, if knowing man better should not be a help to cure him better: at this rate who would be at the trouble of bringing to perfection the science of anatomy?---It were better to let it all alone.

Eraſi. No---that would be to loſe a great many agreeable ſpeculations. But for any thing of uſe, I believe that to find out a new conduit in man's body, or a new ſtar in the heavens, is much the ſame. Nature has ordained, that at appointed ſeaſons men ſhould ſucceed to one another by the means of death: yet ſhe gives them fair play for their lives, and ſuffers them, for a certain ſpace, to defend them as well as they can. But, beyond this, let them make what diſcoveries they pleaſe in anatomy, or penetrate ever ſo exactly into the human fabric, it is in vain, nature will not be baffled; they muſt ſubmit to her law, and die after the ordinary rate.

D I A L O G U E VI.

BERENICE and COSMO the ſecond of Medicis.

COSMO of MEDICIS.

I HAVE juſt now been informed, by ſome of the learned lately come hither, of a piece of news very afflicting to me. You muſt know, Galileo, my mathematician, diſcovered ſome planets which make their courſe round Jupiter, and in honour of me he named them *the ſtars of Medicis*: but I am told they are no longer known by that ap-

pellation, but are called plainly the *Satellites Jovis*. The world, sure, is grown very malicious, and envious of one's glory.

Beren. For certain; I have scarce known more remarkable effects of its malignity.

Cosmo. Ay---you may say so without concern, since you had much better luck than I. You made a vow to cut off your hair, if Ptolomy your husband returned victorious from I know not what war; which he did, having quite defeated the enemy. You consecrated your locks in a temple of Venus, and the next day a mathematician was pleased to make them vanish, conjured them up into heaven, and proclaimed that they were metamorphosed into a constellation, which he called *Berenice's hair*. To make stars pass for a woman's hair was far meaner than to call new planets by the name of a prince; yet your hair has found success, while my poor *stars of Medicis* have had no fortune at all.

Beren. If I could make over my coelestial hair to you, it should be freely at your service, to comfort you: and I will assure you, I would be so generous too as to make no pretences of your being much obliged to me for it.

Cosmo. I should think it a very considerable present though; and I wish with all my soul, my name were as secure of immortality as yours.

Beren. Alas! if all the constellations bore my name, what were I the better? That would remain above in heaven, but I should be as much below here as ever. Mankind is very fantastical, they cannot steal themselves away from death,

but they would steal from her two or three syllables, which belong to her. A very pretty trick they think to put upon her! Would it not be much better if they composed themselves for death with a good grace, and quietly yielded her up both themselves and their names?

Cosmo. I am not of your mind. People are for dying as little as possible, and all mortal as they are, they would fasten upon life still by marble figures, heaps of stone, and inscriptions upon a monument. These are the things which, like drowning men, they grasp at.

Beren. But alas here is the misfortune! These very things which should secure us from death, moulder away, and die too, after their manner. To what then would you fix your immortality? a city, a province, nay an empire cannot be responsible for it.

Cosmo. It is therefore no bad invention, that of giving one's name to the stars, which last for ever.

Beren. And yet it should seem, by what I hear, that even the stars themselves are not to be depended upon, for they say new ones appear, and old ones vanish, and you will see at the long run I shall not have a hair left in the heavens: at least, our names can hardly avoid a grammatical death, if it may be called so; the transposition of a letter or two will make them serve for nothing but wrangling among the critics. I once saw two of the dead engaged in a hot controversy, and going up to them I enquired their names; one, as I was told, was Constantine the great, and the other a barbarian emperor. The dispute was a-

bout the preference of their past grandeur; Constantine said he had been emperor of Constantinople, the barbarian that he had been emperor of Stamboul. The first, in praise of Constantinople, said it was situate upon three seas, the Euxine, the Thracian Bosphorus, and the Propontis; the other replied, that Stamboul had the command of three seas likewise, the Black-Sea, the Straits, and the Sea of Marmora. This strange resemblance amazed Constantine; but having informed himself exactly of the situation of Stamboul, he was more surprised still to find it was Constantinople itself, which he did not perceive until then, by reason of the change of its name. *Alas!* cried he, *I had better have left Constantinople its first name of Byzantium: who will be able to find out the name of Constantine in Stamboul? for certain it is drawing to its end.*

Cosmo. In earnest, this administers some consolation to me, and I begin to submit myself to patience. After all, since we are not able to excuse ourselves from death, it is but reasonable our names should die too, since they are not of better quality than ourselves.

D I A L O G U E VII.

S E N E C A and M A R O T.

S E N E C A.

I AM overpowered with joy to hear that the Stoics are yet in being, and that you were a professor of that sect.

Mar. Without vanity, I was more a Stoic than you, or Chrisippus, or Zeno himself your founder. You were each in a condition to philosophize at your ease, especially yourself, who lived in all abundance. And for the other two, they were never banished nor thrown into prison. But for my share, I endured poverty, banishment, a jail, and what not? and yet made it appear, that all these evils touched only the body, but could not reach the mind of a wise man. Grief attacked me all the ways possible, but had still the shame to be repulsed.

Sen. I am ravished to hear you talk so heroically. By your language alone I should know you for a very great Stoic. And pray was you not the admiration of the age?

Mar. That I was indeed. I did not rest satisfied in bearing my misfortunes patiently, I went further, and insulted them, as I may say, by railery. Constancy would have brought honour enough to another, but I proceeded even to gaiety.

Sen. O Stoic wisdom! thou art no chimera then, as thou art falsely represented! thou art really to be found among men, and here is a sage who by thee was made no less happy than Jupiter himself. Come, let me present you to Zeno, and the rest of our masters; how they will be transported to see the fruit of those admirable lessons with which they blessed the world!

Mar. You will much oblige me, in making me known to such illustrious dead.

Sen. What shall I tell them is your name?

Mar. Clement Marot.

Sen. Marot?----Sure I know that name. Have I not heard you talked of here among a great many modern princes?

Mar. Very likely.

Sen. You writ for their entertainment several little diverting poems?

Mar. I did.

Sen. Then after all you were no philosopher.

Mar. Why not?

Sen. Oh! it is by no means the business of a Stoic to compose books of mirth, and to study to make people laugh.

Mar. I see you are a stranger to the perfection of mirth. I tell you, all wisdom is concealed in it. There is ridicule to be drawn out of every thing; I would undertake, with all the ease in the world, to draw some out of your works themselves. But every thing does not produce the serious, and I defy you ever to turn my works so as to make them yield any. Now does not this shew, that the ridiculous reigns in all; and that the things of the world are not made to be treated seriously? I have been told, since I came hither, that the divine Aeneis of your immortal Virgil has been turned into burlesque verse. I am charmed with the news; it was impossible to take a more lucky way to make it appear that the magnificent and the ridiculous are such near neighbours, that they even touch. Every thing resembles those inventions in perspective, in which you see broken figures dispersed so here and there, that look at them from one point, and they pre-
sent

sent to you an emperor; then change your station, and you see a beggar.

Sen. I am sorry for you, that the world did not comprehend that your buffoon rhimes were purely contrived to lead people into such profound reflections. You would have been much more respected, had they known what a great philosopher you were: but it was impossible to find it out by the writings you published.

Mar. Suppose I had writ mighty folios, to prove that imprisonment, poverty, and banishment, ought not in the least to dash the gaiety of a wise man, had not these been worthy of a Stoic?

Sen. Who doubts it?

Mar. Well; and I have made I know not how many pieces, which prove, that in spite of banishment, a prison, and a slender subsistence, I actually had this gaiety. And pray is not that better?---Your treatises of morals are only speculations upon wisdom. But my verses were a continued practise of it, in all the variety of my conditions.

Sen. I am positive your pretended wisdom was never the effect of your reason, but only of your temper.

Mar. And that is the best sort of wisdom in the world.

Sen. Good! they are pretty wise men indeed that are so by temper! if they are not fools, no praise to them. The happiness of being virtuous may sometimes proceed from nature, but the merit of being so arises only from reason.

Mar. The world has ordinarily but a very in-

different esteem of what you call merit. For if a man has any virtue, and it can be discovered that it is not natural to him, it passes almost for nothing. One would think, however, that being the acquisition of much labour and application, it should be the more valued: but no matter for that, it is a mere effect of his reason, and there is no trusting it.

Sen. The inequality of temper, in your wife men, ought to be trusted yet less. They are wise only by fits, as it pleases their blood; and one should know how the interior parts of their bodies are disposed, to judge how far their virtue will go. Is it not incomparably better to yield only to the conduct of reason, and to render one's self so independent of nature, as to be in a condition never to fear its surprizes?

Mar. I grant you it would be better, if it were but possible. But here is the misfortune, nature always keeps a guard on her rights; she has her first movements in us, which it is impossible ever to take from her; and they often make a considerable advance before reason takes the alarm, so that when she stands to her arms, she finds already a mighty disorder; and it is a question after all, whether she can ever retrieve it. In truth, it is no surprize to me if I see so many people who never trust to reason.

Sen. Yet she, in the mean time, has the sole right to govern mankind, and to order all things in the universe.

Mar. But she is in a very indifferent condition to make use of her authority: I have heard,

that about a hundred years after your death, a Platonic philosopher desired the emperor that then reigned, to let him have a little city of Calabria which lay in ruins, to rebuild and politicize according to the laws of Plato's republic, and call it Platonopolis. But the emperor rejected the philosopher's petition, and had not faith enough in the reason of the divine Plato, to intrust him with the government of this little inconsiderable city. Judge by this now how reason has lost its credit. If she were at all valuable in the world, men alone are capable of esteeming her; yet men, it seems, do not value her at all!

DIALOGUE VIII.

ARTEMISIA and RAYMOND LULLY.

ARTEMISIA.

STRANGE news this! a secret, say you, to change all metals into gold, called the philosopher's stone, or the GREAT WORK?

R. Lully. Yes---and I searched for it a long time.

Artemi. And found it---did you?

R. Lully. No: but the world all believed it, and believes so still. Now to tell you the truth, it is a mere chimera.

Artemi. Then why did you search for it?

R. Lully. I knew no better until since I came hither.

Artemi. That, I take it, is staying for one's wisdom a little of the latest.

R. Lully. I see you have a mind to rally me; but take notice, by the way, that you and I resemble one another more than you imagine.

Artemi. I---that is a good one!---I resemble you? I, who was a pattern of conjugal fidelity! I, who drank off my husband's ashes, and erected him a stately monument! Pray, how could I resemble a man who spent all his life in searching for the secret of changing metals into gold!

R. Lully. Ay, no matter for that, I know what I say-----and after all the fine things you have boasted of yourself, you were out of your wits for a young fellow that did not care a rush for you. To him you sacrificed this magnificent monument which gained you so much glory; and the ashes of Mausolus, as it happened, were found no very effectual antidote against a new passion.

Artemi. How came you, I would fain know, so familiar in my secrets? This passage of my life was private enough, I thought. And I could never have imagined that the public was possessed of it.

R. Lully. You will own then our destinies have some resemblance, since the world has done each of us an honour we never merited. You, in believing you were faithful to the manes of your husband; and me, in believing I had attained the GREAT WORK.

Artemi. I own it freely. The public is made to be cheated in many things, and we ought to take the advantage of its disposition.

R. Lully. But was there nothing more in common to us?

Artemi. I cannot tell---I am not displeased to resemble you thus far---What is it?

R. Lully. Did we not both search for a thing which can never be found? You for the secret of remaining ever faithful to your husband, and I for that of turning metals into gold? I believe there is no great difference between conjugal fidelity and the philosopher's stone.

Artemi. I know there are some who have so charitable an opinion of women, that perhaps they will think the philosopher's stone not impossible enough to enter the comparison.

R. Lully. Oh! I will warrant it as impossible as they can desire.

Artemi. But how comes it then to be so eagerly pursued? and that you, who seem to have been a man of sense, fell into this distraction?

R. Lully. It is true, the philosopher's stone can never be found; yet it is very well worth while to search for it. A great many fine secrets open to us in that search, which were not looked for at all.

Artemi. Would it not be better to search for those secrets which can be found, than to be eternally poring after those which never can?

R. Lully. All the sciences have their chimera, which they are still pursuing, without the possibility of laying hold of it, but in the chase they lay hold of other discoveries which are very useful. Chymistry, for example, has its philosopher's stone; geometry its quadrature of the circle; a-

stronomy its longitude; the mechanics their perpetual motion. It is impossible to find all this, but very useful to search for it. I am talking, perhaps, a language you do not well understand, but you understand, at least, that morality has its chimera too, and that is disinterested, perfect friendship. It is never attained, yet it is useful to pretend to attain it. For, by this at least, men arrive at many other virtues.

Artemi. Once again, I should think, it were best to leave all chimera's, and apply one's self only to the search of what is real.

R. Lully. Do you believe that?---It is fit that in every thing men should propose a point of perfection beyond their reach. They would never put themselves in the road, if they expected to arrive only where they actually arrive: they must have in view an imaginary stage to animate them. If I had been certainly told that chymistry would never be able to instruct me to make gold, I should have slighted the study. If you had been assured that the extreme fidelity, upon which you valued yourself in regard to your husband, was by no means natural, you would not have been at the expence of honouring Mausolus's memory with a magnificent monument. All courage would be lost, if not sustained by false ideas.

Artemi. Then it is not unuseful that men be deceived?

R. Lully. Unuseful? If by mischance the truth discovered herself such as she is, all were ruined. But it is plain she knows of what consequence it

is, and therefore she always keeps herself in some manner hid.

DIALOGUE IX.

APICIUS and GALILEO.

APICIUS.

AH! how forry am I that it was not my luck to be born in your age!

Gal. According to the notion I have of your humour, the age you lived in fitted you much better. Your whole inclination was delicious eating, and you happened into the world, and into Rome too, a very good part of it, just when she was the undisturbed mistress of the earth, when from all parts were daily brought the choicest fowl and fish, and the globe seemed to have been conquered by the Romans only for the luxury of furnishing their tables.

Apic. But mine was an ignorant age, and had there been but one man of your genius, I would have marched barefoot to the world's end to find him. Travelling was nothing with me. Do you know the tour I made in quest of a delicate sort of fish I had tasted at Minturnum in Campania? They told me this fish was much larger in Africa; immediately I fitted out a vessel, and away for Africa! The voyage was difficult and full of danger; upon the African coast I was met by a whole fleet of fishermen, who had been warned of my expedition, and brought me good store of the

fish which occasioned it. I found them no bigger than those of Minturnum; and the same minute, without being touched with the least curiosity towards a country I had never seen, or moved with the importunity of my men, who begged hard for a little refreshment ashore, I ordered the pilots to steer back for Italy. And do ye think I would not much rather have taken this pains to find you?

Gal. I shall never guess for what. I was a poor scholar, of a plain frugal life, always engaged with the stars, and very unskilled in ragous.

Apic. But you invented optic glasses to extend the sight. And in imitation of you, I am told somebody did the same good office for the ear, and made a sort of trumpets to redouble and thicken the voice: in short, you perfected the senses, and taught others to do the same. I should have requested you to have taken some pains about the sense of taste, and to have thought of some instrument to encrease the pleasure of eating.

Gal. Very well: as if the taste had not naturally all the perfection it is capable of!

Apic. Why must it be supposed to have more than the sight?

Gal. The sight is very perfect too; men have admirable good eyes.

Apic. How is that!----Which are the bad eyes then that need the assistance of your glasses?

Gal. Your philosophers eyes-----Those people whose concern it is to know whether the sun has spots, whether the planets move round their own centre, whether the milky way is composed of little stars, and the like; these are all purblind: but

the rest of mankind, that never trouble their heads about such speculations, have an incomparable perfection of sight. If you would only enjoy things, nothing is wanting to complete your enjoyment; if you cannot be content without knowing them, you want all. And thus stands the difference between common men and philosophers: art has no new instruments to give to the one, and can never find the other instruments enough.

Apic. I am content that art furnish no new instruments to the common sort of men to help them to eat finer; but I would have her furnish some to philosophers, as it has given them glasses to see better, and then I should think philosophy had well rewarded the pains she costs them. For, in short, what is she good for if she do not make discoveries, and what need is there of discoveries, if not for pleasures?

Gal. This is an old complaint.

Apic. But since reason sometimes makes new acquisitions, why do not the senses too? I am sure it would be to better purpose.

Gal. If the senses did so, they would be of less value. They are so perfect, that they found at first all the pleasures which could entertain them: and if reason discovers new knowledge, it is a matter of complaint, and shews she was naturally very imperfect.

Apic. What do ye say then to the kings of Persia, who proposed vast rewards to those who should invent new pleasures?

Gal. I say, with submission, they were fools. I will engage they never ruined their revenue by it.

Invent new pleasures! they should first have created new wants.

Apic. How?----Should every pleasure be founded upon a want? I would even quit both rather. Then nature would have given us nothing gratis?

Gal. Can I help it?-----But you, who condemn my notion, have more interest than any body in the truth of it. If there were new pleasures, would you ever be easy to think you were not reserved to live in the last ages, that so you might have the advantage of all the discoveries of the former? As for new knowlege, I know you will never envy its possessors.

Apic. I yield to your opinion, which is more to my taste than I imagined. New knowlege, I perceive, is no such mighty booty, since it is left to any that will seize it, and nature has taken no care that men in all ages should share it alike: but pleasures are of greater value; it would be too partial to let one age have more than another, and for this reason they are distributed in a just equality.

D I A L O G U E X.

PLATO and MARGARET of Scotland.

MARGARET of SCOTLAND.

COME to my aid, divine Plato!----I conjure you to take my part here!

Plato. Why?—What is the matter?

M. of Scot. It is only about a kiss, which in a

transport of satisfaction I gave to a learned man, but very ugly. It is in vain for me to repeat, in my defence, what I said upon the occasion, that I longed to kiss that mouth which had spoke so many fine things. Here is I know not how many ghosts make a ridicule of me, and pretend to maintain that such favours are only for handsome, not fine-speaking mouths, and that learning ought not to be paid in the same coin with love. Pray will you convince these gentlemen-ghosts that what is most worthy of the passions is invisible, and that we may be charmed with beauty, even through a very deformed case of flesh, with which it may chance to be covered.

Plato. How can you ask me to say such a ridiculous thing? there is not a word of truth in it.

M. of Scot. Bless me!—Why you have said it a thousand and a thousand times.

Plato. Ay;—that was in my life-time. I was a philosopher, and had a mind to talk of love; the *decorum* of my character would not have allowed me to talk of it like the authors of the Milesian Tales§; and therefore, I wrapt up those matters in the jargon of philosophy, as in a cloud, that they might not appear to all the world for what indeed they were.

M. of Scot. I am confident you never had such a thought. You certainly meant some other than the common love, since you have so gloriously described the journies made by winged souls in chariots to the extreme vault of heaven, where they

§ The romances of that time.

contemplate beauty in its essence; their unhappy fall from so vast an elevation to the distant earth, occasioned by the unruliness of one of their horses; the tearing of their wings; their mansion in the body, and what befalls them on their meeting with a beautiful countenance, which they presently know for a copy of that beauty they have seen above. The recovery of their wings, which begin to shoot out again, and with which they endeavour a flight towards what they love. In fine, that confusion and terror which seizes them upon sight of the beauty they know to be divine. That holy madness which transports them, and that desire which incites them to sacrifice to the object of their love, as to the immortal gods.

Plato. Upon my honest word now, all this, well understood and faithfully interpreted, signifies in plain speech no more, than that handsome persons are apt to inspire a thousand transports.

M. of Scot. But according to your notion the soul does not rest in corporeal beauty, which serves but to revive the memory of a beauty infinitely more charming. Would it be possible, that all those lively emotions, you have pictured, were caused only by full eyes, a little mouth and a fresh complexion? Ah let them have the beauty of the soul for their object, if you would justify them, and yourself in painting them!

Plato. Shall I tell you the truth? The beauty of the wit excites admiration; that of the soul, esteem; and that of the body, love. Esteem and admiration are calm enough, it is love only is impetuous.

M. of Scot.

M. of Scot. Sure death has made you a libertine,---for in your life-time you not only spoke another sort of language about love, but you practised too the sublime ideas you had conceived of it. Do not you remember you were in love with Arqueanassa of Colophos in spite of old-age? and, pray, did not you make these verses on her?

*Arqueanassa does inspire
In my breast a lover's fire:
Age, its feeble spite displaying,
Vainly wrinkles all her face;
Cupids, in each wrinkle playing,
Charm my eyes with lasting grace.
But before old-time pursu'd her,
Ere he sunk these little caves,
How I pity those who view'd her,
And in youth were made her slaves!*

Now who can believe but this troop of loves, that played in the wrinkles of Arqueanassa, must have been the charms of her wit, which age had brought to perfection? You bewailed those who saw her in her youth, because her beauty made too great impressions on them, and you were enamoured with that merit in her which could not be destroyed by years.

Plato. I am obliged to you for being willing to put so favourable a construction on a small satire I made upon Arqueanassa, who, old as she was, thought to make me love her. No---my passions, I assure you, were not so metaphysical as you imagine, as I have other verses to convince you. And while I am repeating them, if I were.

yet living, I would observe the idle ceremony which I make my Socrates to use when he is about to speak of love; I would cover my face, and you should not hear me but through a vail. But here we have no need of such formalities. My verses are these:

*With pity mov'd, when generous Agathis
Rewards her lover with an eager kiss,
Swift to my lips my trembling soul I feel
Transported flies, and thence to her would steal.*

M. of Scot. How!---Is this Plato?

Plato. The very same.

M. of Scot. What, Plato? with his square shoulders, his grave air, and all that philosophy he carried in his head? Had Plato a taste for such sort of kisses?

Plato. Ay----he had.

M. of Scot. But do you consider then, that the kiss I gave my man of science was all purely philosophical, which your's to your mistress was not at all; so that I personated your character, and you mine.

Plato. I grant it. Philosophers are gallant; while such as should seem to have been born for gallantry affect to be philosophers. We let those run after the chimeras of philosophy who do not know them; and we, in the mean time, make a stoop at what is more real.

M. of Scot. I see I was mistaken in my man, when I called upon the lover of Agathis to justify my kiss. Nay, if I had happened to be in love with this learned piece of deformity, I should have

been yet more to seek, for any vindication from you. However, it is certain wit by itself can create passions, which is a good article for the women, and a saving card for such as are not handsome.

Plato. I do not know whether wit can create passions, but this I know, it often puts the body into a capacity of raising them without the help of beauty, and gives it an agreeableness which is wanted. And for proof of this, we see the body must contribute its share, and always furnish somewhat of its own, as youth at least; for if it does not assist itself at all, wit is of no use to it.

M. of Scot. As if love must have always somewhat material!

Plato. It is its nature. Give it, if you please, wit for its sole object, and see what you will gain by it. You will be surprized to find it immediately returning to matter. If you loved only the wit of your philosopher, for what reason did you kiss him? It is, that the body is allotted to reap the profit of the passions, even which the wit itself has inspired.

DIALOGUE XI.

STRATO and RAPHAEL URBIN.

STRATO.

I LITTLE expected that the counsel I gave my slave would have produced such happy effects; when I was above, it gained me at once my life

and a kingdom, and it procures me the constant admiration of all the sages here below.

R. Urb. Pray what was that counsel?

Stra. I was of Tyre. All the slaves of this city rebelled, and cut their masters throats, except my slave, who had the humanity to spare my life, and to cover me from the fury of all the rest. They agreed that he amongst them should be chosen king who on a certain day first perceived the sun rise. They assembled in a field, and the multitude had their eyes fixed on the east: but my slave, as I had instructed him, looked full west. The rest, you may be sure, laughed at him for a fool: however, with his back turned on them, he spied the first sun-beams on the top of a very high tower, while his fellows were still staring after the body of the sun in the east. The subtilty of his wit was much admired, but he ingenuously confessed he owed it to me, and that I was yet alive. So I was immediately chosen king, as if I had been something more than human.

R. Urb. The counsel you gave your slave proved very lucky to you, but I do not see it was to be admired.

Stra. All the philosophers here will answer for me, that I taught my slave what every wise man ought to practise, which is, that to discover the truth you are to turn your back on the multitude. And that common opinions are always the rules of sound conclusions, provided you take them in a contrary sense.

R. Urb. Ay—those gentlemen talk very well as philosophers; it is their trade to scandalize com-

mon opinions and prejudices,---and yet there is nothing more convenient nor useful.

Stra. By your discourse one would guess you had found your account in following them.

R. Urb. No---I assure you I am very disinterested in the matter; for prejudices, though I declare for them, exposed me to much ridicule in the world. At Rome they were very busy in digging out statues from some ruins, and I being a good painter and sculptor was chosen to judge if they were antique. Michael Angelo, my rival, made privately a very fine statue of Bacchus; when it was finished he broke off a finger of it, and buried the figure in a place where he knew they would dig. As soon as it was found I pronounced it an antique; Michael Angelo maintained it was modern. I insisted chiefly upon the beauty of the statue, which, according to the rules of art, was worthy of the hand of a Grecian; and in the heat of the controversy I run this Bacchus up to the time of Policletus or Phidias. At last Michael Angelo produces the broken finger, and that was a reasoning which would admit of no answer. I was laughed at for my prepossession; but what could I have done without it? I was made a judge, and that character, you know, obliges one to a decision.

Stra. You should have decided according to reason.

R. Urb. Does reason then decide? I should never have known, by consulting her, whether the statue was antient or modern; I should only have known it was very fine. But here comes preju-

dice to my aid, and tells me that a fine statue must needs be an antique: this is a decision, and I give judgment.

Stra. It is not strange if reason furnish no incontestable principles upon matters of such little importance; but upon all that regards the conduct of men, her decisions are very certain, and the only misfortune is that she is seldom consulted.

R. Urb. Let us consult her then upon any point, to see what she will establish. Let us ask her whether people should weep or laugh at the death of their friends and relations. She tells you, on one side, *they are lost to you,---weep then.---* On the other, *they are delivered out of the miseries of life,---therefore laugh.* These are the answers of reason. But the custom of the country soon determines this. We weep, if that commands us, and so heartily too, that we have not the least notion that it were possible to laugh on such an occasion: or we laugh so heartily, that we cannot conceive how it were possible to weep.

Stra. Reason is not always so irresolute. She leaves that only to be executed by prejudice, which it is not worth her while to execute: but upon how many very considerable affairs has she most exact ideas from whence she deduces equal consequences?

R. Urb. These exact ideas are but a very small number, or I am much mistaken.

Stra. No matter for that. It is to them alone an entire faith is due.

R. Urb. That is impossible; since reason proposes too small a number of certain maxims, and the

mind is made to believe more. So that the surplus of its credulity goes to the advantage of prejudices, and false opinions come in to fill up the vacancy.

Stra. And what occasion is there to throw one's self into error? Cannot a man, in doubtful matters, suspend his judgment? Reason stops when she is at a loss which path to take.

R. Urb. True. In that case she has no other secret to prevent her losing her way, than not to move one step further. The road divides into two, and there she remains at a stand. But this is a violent posture to the mind of man, it is naturally in motion and must proceed. All the world are not qualified to doubt, there must be knowledge to arrive at that, and force to hold there. Besides, doubt is void of action, and men must be in action.

Stra. Therefore people ought to retain the prejudices of custom, that they may act like men. But to get rid of the prejudices of the understanding, in order to act like wise men.

R. Urb. It is better to retain all. Perhaps you do not know the two answers of the old Samnite to his countrymen, who sent to ask his advice what they should do when they had inclosed in a narrow pass the Romans, their mortal enemies, and had it in their power to do with them what they pleased. He answered, that they should put them all to the sword. This counsel seemed too harsh and cruel, and the Samnites sent once more to remonstrate the inconvenience of it. He replied then that they should give them all their lives

without conditions. They followed neither of his directions, and they paid for their folly. It is the same with prejudices; keep them all, or exterminate all; else those you put away will make you distrust all the opinions you retain. The misfortune of being deceived in many things, will be no longer balanced by the pleasure of being deceived unknowingly. And, in short, you will neither have the lights of truth, nor the charms of error.

Stra. If there is no way to avoid the alternative you propose, one need not pause which side to take: men must rid themselves of all prejudices.

R. Urb. But reason clears the mind of all its old opinions, without substituting any others in their room. She makes a kind of vacuum in it, and who can bear that? No;---together with that small share of reason which men possess, they must have their *quantum* of prejudices too, as usual. Prejudices are the supplement of reason. All that is deficient on one side is made up on the other.

D I A L O G U E XII.

LUCRETIA and B. PLOMBERG.

B. PLOMBERG.

YOU will scarce believe me now, yet there is nothing more true: the emperor Charles the fifth had an affair with the princess I named, and I served as a blind. But that was not all. The princess desired me to be mother to a prince that

was born; and to oblige her I consented. I see I have surprized you!-----Have you not heard say, that whatever merit people have, they ought to be superior to it by the little value they put upon it? That your wits, for instance, ought to be above their own talent? For my part, I was above my virtue, I had more than I cared for.

Luc. Phoo---you play the fool; one can never have too much.

B. Plom. In earnest, if I might be sent into the world again, upon condition I should be the most accomplished of all my sex, I am confident I should refuse the offer. My perfections, I know, would pique a great many others, and I should be eternally wishing for some defect, for the consolation of those I were to live with.

Luc. It seems then, that in pure good-nature to the women of less virtue, you were pleased to qualify your's.

B. Plom. I qualified the appearance of it, lest they should have looked upon me as their accuser to the public, if they had thought me more severe than themselves.

Luc. They were highly obliged to you, especially the princess, who was particularly happy in finding a mother for her children. And did she put but one upon you?

B. Plom. No.

Luc. I am amazed! she might have made more use of so commodious a friend, for it seems you never troubled yourself with reputation.

B. Plom. Now prepare to wonder.-----Know then, that this indifference for my reputation was

lucky to me. The truth discovered itself, in spite of all my care; and it was found that the young prince was none of mine. People did me more justice than I desired, and it seemed as if they resolved to make me a double reparation for my having been so little ostentatious of my virtue; and for my generosity in excusing the public from paying me the esteem which was my due.

Luc. A very pretty sort of generosity! there is no abatement to be made to the public in that article.

B. Plom. How?-----It is very humorous, let me tell you, and often strives to revolt from those that pretend too imperiously to exact its esteem. You, of all the world, should know this best. There have been some so strangely affronted at your extravagant ardour for glory, that they have done their endeavour to lessen, as much as possible, the mighty merit of your death.

Luc. And which way could they attack so heroic an action?

B. Plom. How do I know!----I think they say you played the heroine a little of the latest. That your death would have been much more *a propos*, if you had not stayed for the ravisher's last efforts: but that you seemed loth to kill yourself hand over head, and not know for what. In fine, the world appears to have done you justice with regret, and me with pleasure; perhaps because you were too hasty in the pursuit of glory, and I let it come without wishing for.

Luc. Add too, that you did all you could to hinder it.

B. Plom. Well; and is the merit of modesty nothing? I had so much as to be willing to conceal my virtue. You, on the contrary, were for making a parade with your's. You would not kill yourself, but in form, with all your family about you. Is not virtue then content to be her own witness? and should not great souls despise this phantom, glory?

Luc. Have a care of that; it is too dangerous a piece of wisdom. This phantom, as you call it, is the most powerful thing in the world. It is the soul of all, it is preferred to every thing, and do but observe how it peoples the Elysian plains. Glory sends us more multitudes hither than a fever. I have some right to say so; for I was myself of the number.

B. Plom. You ought then to pass for a fool with the rest, you that died of that vain distemper. For from the first moment one is here, all the glory in the world does one no good.

Luc. True---but it is one of the secrets of this place---and the living ought never to know a word of it.

B. Plom. Why---what is the harm if they part with an idea that deceives them?

Luc. Then farewell all heroic actions.

B. Plom. No; people would perform them out of a principle of duty, and that is a nobler view; it is founded upon reason.

Luc. And it is that makes it too weak. Glory is founded upon the imagination, and is therefore much more powerful. Even reason itself would not approve that men should submit themselves

to her conduct alone, she is too sensible how much she needs the assistance of the imagination. When Curtius was just going to sacrifice himself for his country, and to ride armed into the gulf that opened in the middle of Rome, had it been said to him, *It is your duty now to leap into this abyss, but be assured no-body will ever speak a word of your exploit*-----in earnest I am afraid Curtius would have turned back his horse. For my own part, I will not swear I should have killed myself upon the bare view of my duty. For what? I should have thought my duty not touched by the rape; or at most, that it might have been satisfied with tears. But for a glorious name the dagger was necessary, and so I stabbed myself.

B. Plom. Shall I tell you my opinion of the matter? I should think these great actions might as well be omitted, as performed out of so false a principle as that of glory.

Luc. Not so fast, I beseech you---all duties are fulfilled, though not as duties. All great actions, which it is fit men should perform, are performed: in a word, the order which nature would establish in the world has its course; and there is no more to be said, but this, What she could not have obtained of our reason, she obtains of our folly.

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D I A L O G U E I.

ANNE of Britany, and MARY of England.

ANNE of BRITANY.

FOR certain my death was a singular pleasure to you, since you passed the sea immediately to mary Louis XII. and take possession of the throne I left vacant. Yet you had but little enjoyment of it; and that very youth and beauty, which captivated the king so extravagantly, and made him so easily forget the loss of me, revenged my quarrel on you, for they hastened on his death, and disappointed you of being long a queen.

M. of Eng. It is true, royalty shewed itself like an apparition to me, and vanished in an instant.

A. of Bri. And, after this, you became duchess of Suffolk; a very fair fall!----but I, thanks to my stars, had a better destiny; for when Charles VIII. died, I lost not my royalty by his

decease, but married his successor, a peculiar instance of good fortune.

M. of Eng. Will you believe me now, if I tell you I never envied you in the least this good fortune.

A. of Bri. No indeed-----I apprehend too well, what it is to be duchess of Suffolk, after having been queen of France.

M. of Eng. But I loved my lord of Suffolk.

A. of Bri. No matter for that-----Is it possible for one who has tasted the pleasures of royalty, to relish any others?

M. of Eng. Yes----provided they are those of love. I declare to you that you had no reason to wish me ill, because I succeeded you; had I been always mistress of my fate, I would have been no other than duchess of Suffolk. I returned immediately into England, very well satisfied to take up this title, when I was free from that of queen.

A. of Bri. Sure you are not of so mean a spirit.

M. of Eng. I confess ambition was not my taste. Nature has furnished humankind with pleasures that are plain, easy, and serene, and their imagination has created them such as are perplexed, uncertain, and hard to come by: but nature, certainly, is more ingenious to choose pleasures for them, than they for themselves; why, then do they not leave the care of it to her? She has invented love, a most agreeable one, and they have found out ambition, of which there was no need.

A. of Bri. Who told you they found out am-

bition? The desires of greatness and command are no less inspired by nature, than the soft inclination of love.

M. of Eng. Ambition is easily known for a child of the imagination, it wears such lively marks of its father's features. It is a most restless busy thing, full of projects and chimera's; no sooner has it come up to its wishes, but it bounds away beyond them, and runs a giddy race which has no goal.

A. of Bri. But love, for its misfortune, reaches the goal too soon.

M. of Eng. If that should be granted, yet all the consequence is, love can make us often happy, but ambition never; or if it can, yet pleasures of that sort are but for few people, and therefore it is not nature offers them, for her favours are universal. Now look upon love! it is made for the whole world. It is only those mistaken wretches that seek happiness in extravagant elevations of grandeur, whom nature seems to have thought unworthy of these tender enjoyments. A king, who has a hundred thousand hands at command, can scarce be secure of one heart; and can never be certain whether those services are not paid to his quality only, which would freely be performed to the person of another. In short, royalty deprives him of all those pleasures, which have the most simplicity in them, and the most soothing tenderness.

A. of Bri. You have not proved the condition of kings much more unhappy for this small inconvenience you are pleased to discover in it. To

see my will not only followed, but even prevented, an infinity of fortunes depending on a single word, which I can pronounce when I please; such a world of cares, such endless designs, unwearied applications, and eager sollicitude to please, of which I am the sole object, certainly with this consolation I may be satisfied, though I do not know precisely whether it is for my rank I am beloved, or for my person. But the pleasures of ambition, you say, are made but for a few; now that commends them to me the more. Singularity in good fortune is that which most pleases, and such as wear crowns are singled so advantageously from the condition of other people, that what they lose in pleasures common to all the world, is abundantly supplied in others more sublime.

M. of Eng. Alas! do but judge of the loss they suffer, by the sensibility with which they entertain these plain and common pleasures when any one presents itself to them. Will you please to hear a pleasant relation which I had the other day from a princess of my own blood, who reigned long and happily in England, but unmarried. When she gave the first audience to the Dutch ambassadors, there was in their retinue a very handsome young gentleman, who, upon sight of the queen, turned immediately to those who stood next to him, and spoke something very softly, but with such a peculiar air, that her majesty took notice of it, and pretty well guessed the matter too; for women have an admirable instinct, you know. Three or four words of this young Hollander, though she heard not a syllable of them,

took up her thoughts more than a whole harangue of the ambassadors; and as soon as ever they were withdrawn, she resolved to satisfy her curiosity, and commanded those, to whom the gentleman spoke, to tell her what it was. They answered, with a world of respect, that it would be presumption to so great a queen, and excused themselves a great while from repeating it. But at last, when she used her authority, she was informed that the Hollander had said softly, that---*upon his faith she was a very handsome person,* and----in short, that he added some expressions free enough, but very sprightly, to signify some certain wishes, and that she was a woman to his fancy.-----This they related with a great deal of apprehension; but they might have spared their fears, for the worst that followed, was only this, that when the ambassadors took their audience of leave, she was pleased to make the gallant Hollander a considerable present. Thus you see, that notwithstanding the croud of pleasures which belong to pomp and royalty, this small pleasure of being thought handsome made its way through them all, and touched her very soul with its charms.

A. of Bri. Yet after all, she would never have been willing to purchase it with the loss of the others. Whatever is too plain and simple, is not accommodated to human nature. Mankind is not content that pleasure should only play upon their senses with touching softness, unless it agitate and transport them. What is the reason, I beseech you, that the pastoral life, as the poets

have painted it, adorned all with sweetness and pleasant simplicity, has only been found in their works, and would not succeed in the practice?---- It is too soft, and has no variety.

M. of Eng. But will you tell me whence it happens, that the prospect of the proudest and most pompous court, in the universe, soothes the mind less than those soft ideas their fancies present to them in such a life. Certainly it is because they were formed for it.

A. of Bri. It seems then, that the enjoyment of your simple and serene pleasures finds place only among the agreeable dreams which men form in their fancies!

M. of Eng. I beg your pardon!----though it is plain that few have a taste good enough to chuse these pleasures at first, yet they are glad to end with them, when they can. And thus the imagination, having wearied itself in the round of false objects, returns at last to such as are true.

D I A L O G U E II.

C H A R L E S V. and E R A S M U S.

E R A S M U S.

MAKE no doubt of it-----if there were any superiority of place among the dead, I tell you I would not yield to you an inch.

Ch. V. How!-----Why, shall a grammarian, a scholar, and, to equip you with the best of your titles, a man of wit, pretend to hold up his head,

and flourish it over a prince that saw himself master of the best part of Europe?

Eraf. You may put America into the scale too, if you please, and yet I will not fear you a jot the more. All this grandeur was mere chance-work, and no more, in short, than a composition of lucky accidents; and he that shall take them to pieces, and examine them severally, must needs make you sensible of it too. As for example---Had Ferdinand, your grandfather, been a man of his word, you had scarce had a foot of land in Italy-----If any of the other princes could have found brains enough to comprehend that there were antipodes, Columbus had never made his applications to him, and America had never been a part of your inheritance----If after the death of the last duke of Burgundy, Louis the eleventh had considered what he did, Maximilian had never had Burgundy to his share, nor you the Low Countries----And if Henry of Castile, your grandmother's brother, had not lain under a scandalous character among the women, or if his spouse had not been of a virtue that no body would swear for, her daughter had passed for his own, and you had been fairly wiped of the kingdom of Castile.

Ch. V. Why, you make me quake with fear-----Methinks I am even at this minute losing Castile, the Netherlands, America, or Italy.

Eraf. You may spare your raillery!-----Among these your ancestors aforesaid, could one have been furnished with a little more wit, and another with a little more honesty, it would have cost you dear.

There is not one particular I have related, but was necessary for the making up of your fortune, even to the very impotence of your great uncle, and the wantonness of your great aunt. And this, no doubt, is a very solid building that is raised on such precarious foundations!

Ch. V. In truth, who can stand so severe a scrutiny as this? I must own that all my grandeur and titles vanish before you into nothing.

Eraf. Yet these are the ornaments which you thought made you so fine! with what ease have I stripped you of your feathers! Do not you remember the story of Cimon the Athenian? who having taken several Persian prisoners, exposed their habits to sale on one side of the way, and their naked bodies on the other; now the habits being very rich, there was a prodigious croud of purchasers about them; but how many do ye think for the men?-----Not one. In good earnest, I am of opinion that a multitude of people would fare like these Persians, could one separate their personal merit from the gifts which fortune has bestowed on them.

Ch. V. But what is personal merit, I pray?

Eraf. Is that a question?-----All that is within us, as wit, for example, and knowlege.

Ch. V. And from hence you allow we may derive our glory?

Eraf. Doubtless-----these are not the goods of fortune, like nobility or riches.

Ch. V. I am amazed at what you say!-----Do not the sciences, I beseech you, descend to the learned in the same manner as riches do to the

men of fortune, that is, by succession? I tell ye, you learned men inherit the antients as we do our fathers; as these have left us all we possess, so the other have bequeathed you all you know. And from hence it comes to pass, that many men of letters have the same veneration for the traditions of the antients, that some others have for the lands and houses of their ancestors, and would take it very ill to have any thing changed.

Eraf. But great persons are born heirs to their father's grandeur, so are not the learned to the knowlege of the antients. Learning is not an estate which a man receives by succession, but an acquisition which he makes; or if it is a succession, yet it is so hard to come by, that there is room enough left for glory still.

Ch. V. Well—pray be pleased then to weigh the pains in acquiring these riches of the mind, with the trouble of preserving those of fortune, and you will find the scales pretty even. For, in short, if difficulty be only regarded by you, it is a clear case that the business and affairs of the world have more of that, than the quiet amusements and speculations of the closet.

Eraf. But we will wave, if you please, the dispute about learning, and confine ourselves to the topic of wit. This, at least, is a possession that does by no means depend upon chance.

Ch. V. Are you sure of that? What! does not wit depend upon a certain happy disposition of the brain, and is it less a chance to be born with a brain well tempered, than to be born the son of a king? You were a great wit, I confess, but will

you do me the favour to enquire of all the philosophers how this came to pass, and what hindered you from being a stupified blockhead? It was nothing almost, a small disposition of the fibres, or some such slender matter, which escapes the search of the most exact anatomy. And yet after all, these gentlemen, the wits, have the assurance to bear us in hand, that theirs are the only goods independent on fortune, and think they have a right, upon that score, to take place of all the rest of mankind.

Eraf. It seems then, by your account, the merit is the same, to have good store of coin, or a large share of wit?

Ch. V. To have wit is the happiest chance of the two, but it is a chance still.

Eraf. Why then, in short, all is chance.

Ch. V. It is so, if by chance we mean a secret disposition and order which we are not acquainted with. You talked, just now, of stripping men of their feathers; I will be judged by yourself, if I have not stripped them of finer feathers than you did. You only robbed them of some advantages of birth, but I have taken from them those of the mind. If mankind, before they grew vain upon any thing, would but consider how far they could make out their title, there would be no such thing as vanity in the world.

DIALOGUE III.

ELIZABETH, Queen of England, and the Duke
of Alençon.

DUKE of ALENÇON.

BUT what did you mean by flattering me so long with hopes that I should marry you, when you were resolved in your soul to come to no conclusion?

Q. Eliz. You have no such particular cause to complain; I served several others just so, who were in nothing your inferiors. I was indeed the Penelope of my age: you, and the duke of Anjou your brother, the arch-duke, and the king of Sweden, were all my suitors, who pleased themselves with the hopes of an island much more considerable than that of Ithaca. I held you in suspense for several years, and at last---I laughed at you.

D. of Alen. We have some certain persons here, who would scarce allow that you were so like Penelope as you pretend, not every way at least---but comparisons, you know, are always defective in some point or other.

Q. Eliz. Look you, my lord----I never took you for a wit, and I see no reason to alter my opinion of you now---but, in short, if you had sense enough to consider what you say---

D. of Alen. Mighty well! this heroic air becomes you admirably! but, compliments apart,

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(which are idle among the dead) what an ostentatious flourishing did you always make about your virginity, and being a maiden queen? Witness that great country in America, which you named Virginia, in memory of the most suspected of all your qualities; a name which would never have passed, had not the place, by good luck, been in another world. But no matter for that, for I am upon another question; and, pray, will you give me but one reason for that mysterious conduct of yours, and all those projects of marriage which ended in nothing? Was it because your father Henry VIII. was six times married, that you took a resolution not to marry at all, as the perpetual rambles of Charles V. taught Philip the second never to stir from Madrid?

Q. Eliz. I might very well stand to the reason you have furnished me withal. My father, in effect, spent his whole life in marrying and unmarried, in repudiating some of his wives, and beheading others. Now here was the true secret of my conduct, that I had observed there was nothing pleasanter in the world than to amuse one's self with forming designs, and making great preparations, without executing any. Possession is always short of hope, and things never pass out of imagination into reality without losing considerably. When you came into England to espouse me, there was nothing but balls, feasts, and continual rejoicing; nay, I proceeded so far as to give you a ring: and hitherto every thing had as smiling a face as was possible, because all this was preparation and idea; therefore having thus ex-

hausted all the agreeable belonging to marriage, I did prudently to stop there, and send you home again about your business.

D. of Alen. To speak freely—your maxims would never have fitted me. No; I should have been for something more than chimera's.

Q. Eliz. Alas! if chimera's were to be taken from mankind, what pleasure would they have remaining? I see plainly now that you did not taste the most agreeable parts of your life. But, in truth, I must say you were very unhappy for it.

D. of Alen. Agreeable? Sure you only rally me----in all my life what had I agreeable? I never succeeded in any one thing. Four times I was flattered with the hopes of a crown, first Poland was in prospect, then England, afterward the Low-Countries, and lastly France in all appearance was to have been mine, and yet in conclusion I was king of nothing.

Q. Eliz. Why, that now is the very happiness which you was not aware of. To be always amused with hopes and imaginary prospects, like visions of Fairy-Land, without any thing real. For you did nothing but prepare for royalty as long as you lived, as I did for marriage.

D. of Alen. But as I am of opinion that an actual marriage would have done you no displeasure, so I confess a true royalty would have pleased me very well.

Q. Eliz. Alas! pleasures are not solid enough to bear our plunging into them, we must be content to play only upon their surface. They are like those marshy grounds which a man may well

enough run lightly over, but if he venture to fix his foot, they sink away beneath him.

D I A L O G U E IV.

WILLIAM of Cabestan, and ALBERT FREDERICK of Brandenburg.

A. FR. of BRANDENBOURG.

I LOVE you the better, methinks, for having been out of your wits as well as myself. But, pray, let us have the history of your folly; how came it to pass?

W. of Cab. I was a Provencial poet, much esteemed in my age, and hence arose my misfortune. I fell in love with a damsel I had made famous by my verses: she took such a pride in my poetry, that she was afraid I should employ it in honour of somebody else; and, in short, to secure my muse to herself, she presented me with a damned potion that turned my brain, and spoiled me for a verse-maker for ever.

A. Fr. of Brand. Pray, how long have you been dead?

W. of Cab. About four hundred years.

A. Fr. of Brand. Sure, poets were very scarce in your age, since people esteemed them so much, as to poison them in that fashion. I am sorry you was not born in my time, you might have made verses upon all the handsome women in Christendom, and no danger of your being poisoned for it.

W. of Cab. I believe it: for among all the wits and poets that are come hither, I do not hear one complaining he met with the same destiny. But, pray, how was it that you lost your wits?

A. Fr. of Brand. Troth, in a very rational manner.-----There was a certain king who run mad with having seen a goblin in a forest; but what was that? I had a vision, I assure you, much more terrible.

W. of Cab. And what did you see then?

A. Fr. of Brand. What?----Why the dreadful preparations of my own nuptials. I was married to Maria Eleonora of Cleves, and at the wedding-feast I was musing upon the matter, and I made such deep judicious reflections on matrimony, that I had not a drachm of judgment left.

W. of Cab. Pray, had you any sober intervals afterward?

A. Fr. of Brand. Yes indeed.

W. of Cab. So much the worse; and I was yet more unhappy, for my wits were restored entirely.

A. Fr. of Brand. I should not have called that an unhappiness.

W. of Cab. Why then you know nothing. For when one is once a fool, it is best to be a fool absolute and for ever. These alternatives of reason and folly, and these entire returns of reason, are misfortunes which attend us lesser fools only, who were so by accident. But if you observe those which nature produces every day in her ordinary course, and which people the world with their numbers, you will find them always uniform,

thorough-paced, finished fools, that are never cured at all.

A. Fr. of Brand. For my part, I should have fancied it was best to be as little of a fool as one could.

W. of Cab. I find you are not sensible of the advantage of folly: it hinders a man from knowing himself; and really the prospect of one's self is but a very melancholy one. And since it is never like to be otherwise, when we have once lost it, we should never wish to recover it one single moment.

A. Fr. of Brand. You talk very prettily, methinks.--Yet never think to persuade me that there are any such absolute fools as you speak of; I believe there are none but such as we were: all the rest of mankind have reason; or else to lose one's wits would be to lose nothing, and there would be no distinction betwixt mad-men and men in their senses.

W. of Cab. Mad-men are only fools of a particular species. For the follies of men in general being of the same nature, do very luckily agree so well together, that they serve for the strongest ties of society. Witness that ambitious desire of immortality, that false glory, and a thousand other principles, which give motion to all the affairs that are transacted in the world: and none are called fools by all people, but some certain fools who are out of the game, as it were, and whose folly is not in tune with the rest, nor enters into the ordinary commerce of life.

A. Fr. of Brand. But your mad-men are such

fools that they often cry fool at one another, whereas other men converse together as wise persons.

W. of Cab. Have a care what you say! I tell you all men are making mouths and pointing at one another, and, if you please, you may observe that this is a judicious establishment of nature. For instance, the solitary man laughs at the courtier,----but in recompence he never crosses his game at court. The courtier ridicules the solitary man, but never disturbs him in his retreat. If there were but one party universally acknowledged to be the only people of reason, all the world would be for striking in amongst them, and there would be eternally crouds and confusion; therefore it is much better they should divide into a great many less troops, that do not embarrass together, but take all their several ways, and laugh at one another.

A. Fr. of Brand. To deal freely, I find death itself has not cured you, but with all your reasoning you are as great a fool as ever. That cursed draught will never be out of your head.

W. of Cab. Why that is the notion now which one fool should have of another. True wisdom would too much distinguish and singularize its possessors, but the opinion of wisdom puts all men upon a level, and yet satisfies them every whit as well.

DIALOGUE V.

AGNES SOREL and ROXOLANA.

A. SOREL.

TO tell you the truth, I do not understand your Turkish gallantry: the ladies of the *seraglio* have a domineering sort of a lover, that needs only say—*It is my pleasure*-----a very blunt way of courtship, where there is no such thing, on one side, as gentle repulses and soft engaging resistance, nor any submissions or care to please on the other; which is as much as to say, that the sultans and their sultanas lose all the agreeable part of love.

Rox. How would you have it?---The Turkish emperors are extremely jealous of their authority, and upon politic reasons have neglected these refined tenderneesses, lest the ladies, not being in absolute dependance, should usurp too great a power over them sometimes, and meddle too much in their affairs of state.

A. Sor. Well---and suppose they did, are they sure it would be a misfortune? Love is ingenious in a thousand things, and here stands the person, though I say it, who if she had not been sovereign of the French king's affections, heaven only knows where France had been at this moment. Pray---have you never heard what a wretched condition our affairs were in under Charles the seventh, and to what a hopeful pass all was brought, when the

English were become masters of almost the whole kingdom?

Rox. Yes, that I have; for the history has made a mighty noise, and I know that a certain maid was the deliverer of France. But what---were you at the same time the king's mistress too?

A. Sor. You are in a mistake; that maid and I are not at all akin. The king, my lover, determined to leave his kingdom a prey to usurping strangers, and go hide himself in a mountainous country, whither I had no great inclination to follow him. I sent for an astrologer, whom I had been dealing with underhand, who, pretending to have cast my nativity, told me one day, in the king's presence, that as sure as stars were stars, it was my destiny to inspire a long and lasting passion into the heart of a certain great monarch, and if this did not come to pass he would never trust the planets more. Immediately I addressed myself to the king,---*Your majesty will not resent it, I hope, if I take my leave of you, and withdraw to the English court, since you are resolved to be a king no longer; and you have not yet loved me long enough to fulfil this destiny.* Now it was the fear of losing me made him determine to keep his crown, and from that moment he began to re-establish himself. See here how much France was obliged to love; and how amorous and gallant that nation ought to be in mere gratitude!

Rox. Very true. But to return to the maid I was speaking of; pray what was it then she performed? Could there be so vile a mistake in history as to attribute to a poor country wench the

glory which belonged to a fine court lady, and the king's mistress?

A. Sor. It would not be strange if the history had made such a mistake. Yet it is certain, that maid animated the army, but I had first animated the king. She found him marching sword in hand against the English, and then she assisted him considerably; but it was I first roused him to that martial posture. In fine, to convince you of the share I had in this important affair, let me repeat to you the testimony of one of Charles the seventh's successors, who was pleased to compliment my memory with these four lines.

*Gentille Agnes plus d'honneur tu merite,
La cause etant de France recouvrer
Que ce que peut dedans un cloitre ouvrier,
Close nonnain, ou bien devot hermite.*

*Tho' chaster maids may lovely Agnes blame,
Yet France recover'd has secur'd her fame;
And greater praise her mem'ry shall pursue,
Than is to cloister'd nuns or holy hermits due.*

Now what say you, Roxolana? You must confess, at least, that had I been a sultaneſs, as you were, and had I not had that authority over Charles the seventh to threaten him as I did, he and his kingdom had been ruined utterly.

Rox. I admire at the pride you take in this petty action? It was no such difficult matter for you that were free and at your own disposal, to establish yourself such a power over the soul of your lover. But I subjected the sultan, though I

was a slave myself. You made Charles VII. king, almost without his consent; I made Soliman, in spite of himself, my husband.

A. Sor. How is that? It is said the sultans never marry.

Rox. I grant it. Yet for all that, I projected to marry Soliman, though the violent passion he had conceived for me had several times been satisfied before. You shall hear a stratagem far more refined than yours. I began to build temples, and perform several other acts of devotion; in the midst of which I feigned a profound melancholy. A thousand times and more did the sultan tenderly enquire the cause. After I had played over all the necessary forms, I told him, sighing, that all my good deeds, as I had been informed by the doctors, were like to be of no avail to me; for, since I was in the condition of a slave, the merit of them was entirely transferred to my lord and sovereign; and this was the cause of my melancholy. Soliman immediately gave me my freedom, to this charitable end, that the merit of my piety might become my own. But when he thought to enjoy me as he had done before, and treat me as one of the ladies of the *seraglio*, I surprized him extremely, and with a mighty serious air begged his pardon, and told him, he had no right over the person of a free woman. Soliman had a tender conscience, and consults the point with a certain doctor of the law that I had been tampering with before, who, according to my instructions, answered him; that he ought to be very careful how he assumed any power over

one who was now no longer his slave and property; and that, in short, there must be no more meddling without matrimony. He was now more in love with me than ever; he had but one way to help himself, and that an extraordinary one, and dangerous too for a sultan; yet he ventured it, and married me.

A. Sor. I must confess, there is a mighty pleasure in subjecting those who fore-arm themselves against our power, and bid us defiance.

Rox. Ay, ay; men may set the best face upon the matter; but when we have once taken hold of their passions, we may lead them even where we please. Let me, for example, but take a turn once more upon the stage of life, then give me to my share the proudest and most domineering spark upon earth, and see if I do not humble him into what I please, provided I am furnished with a great deal of wit, a sufficient stock of beauty, and a *modicum* of love.

D I A L O G U E VI.

J O A N I. Queen of Naples, and A N S E L M.

J O A N of N A P L E S.

WHAT! can you foretel me nothing? Sure you have not forgot all your astrology?

Anselm. How, do ye think it is possible to put it in practice? here is neither sky nor stars.---

J. of Naples. No matter; I will excuse you from observing the rules so precisely.

Anselm.

Anselm. A very pretty fancy! for a dead man to make prophecies!----but upon what, I beseech you?

J. of Naples. Upon myself, and what concerns me.

Anselm. Good!-----you are dead, and like to continue so to eternity; that is all I can prophesy of you. Do ye think our condition or affairs here may change?

J. of Naples. No, but that is my affliction. And though I am convinced nothing more will happen to me, yet methinks if you could find but a way to foretel me something or other, it would divert me strangely. You cannot imagine what an uneasiness it is, to have no scenes of futurity to look upon, no accidents to come----for pity's sake, one poor prediction! and let it be even what you please.

Anselm. By this restless curiosity of yours, I should take you for one of the living; it is the very humour that possesses all above. There people cannot sit down contented with what they are, but are mad to anticipate what they shall be; but certainly here we ought to be wiser.

J. of Naples. Alas! have they not reason? the present is but a point of time, and it would be hard indeed if their views must terminate there: is it not better to extend the prospect as far as they can, and to gain something from futurity?

Anselm. And what is the consequence? like extravagant heirs, they borrow so much upon the time to come, by their hopes and imagination, that when it is arrived they find the stock exhaust-

ed, and nothing left to entertain them; and yet the same impatience remains to plague them still. Futurity is the great decoy of mankind, and we astrologers are best acquainted with their weakness. Therefore we amuse them with confident stories, that there are signs hot and cold, male and female; that some planets are good, some evil, and others indifferent of themselves, but take their character from such as they are in conjunction with. And all this stuff passes very currently with them, because it is thought to lead them into the knowlege of the future.

J. of Naples. Well, and does it not? A pretty jest, methinks! that you, who have been my astrologer, should bewray your own art.

Anselm. Hark ye!----We dead folks do not use to lie; and to be free with you, that astrology, for which you esteemed me so much, was all a downright cheat.

J. of Naples. Excuse me; I will not take your own word for it. A cheat! How then could you foretel I should be four times married? Was it likely, that a person of tolerable sense would venture upon matrimony four times? Come----I am sure you must have read it in the stars.

Anselm. I consulted your inclinations more than the stars; yet the success of a prophecy, after all, is no proof. Will you let me bring you to one of the dead here, who shall tell you a pleasant story? He was one of my brother star-gazers, and as great an unbeliever in his art as your humble servant. However, for experiment's sake, he set himself one day to observe the rules with

the greatest strictness, and prophesied of some events, harder to be guessed at than your four marriages. All that he foretold came punctually to pass, but never was man more surprized. He presently falls to his astrological figures, and reviews the ground of his predictions. And what do ye think he found? Why---only that he had made a grand mistake, and that if his calculations had been right, he ought to have prophesied quite the contrary.

J. of Naples. If I thought this story were true, I should be sorry the world does not know it, that the astrologers might be detected, for a pack of gipsies and cozening knaves.

Anselm. There are a thousand stories of them known much worse than this, yet the trade will always hold good. People will never suffer themselves to be undeceived in matters relating to *the time to come*. There is a charm in it, and they will dote on, to the end of the world. Observe, for example, how men sacrifice all their past and present possession to this hope, and that and all the rest, as fast as it comes to hand, to another: one would think it were a malicious trick established in nature, to fool them like children, and by loosening their grasp to make them drop what they hold. They never turn their cares upon being happy in the present moment; that is an affair adjourned to *hereafter*. As if the time to come were of a different make, and of better quality than the time present.

J. of Naples. No---it is not of a different make, but, however, it is good to fancy it so.

Anselm. And what is the effect of this fine fancy? I have a fable that informs you in three words---An honest wretch was a-dry, and fate him down by the side of a spring, but would not drink of the water that was running before him, in hopes it would flow purer anon. The time he intended to stay was over, but the water still the same. *This will never do*, cries the fellow, *it is better yet to wait a little longer*. And what do ye think he did at last? he tarried till the spring happened to dry up, and so went away a-thirst.

J. of Naples. That was my very case; and I believe here is not one among all the dead, whose life was not quite ebb'd out, before he had made his propos'd use of it. But what then? I reckon there is a great deal, after all, in the pleasure of forecasting, in employing hope, and fear too, and in having a futurity to pry into. A wise man, according to your notions, would be just like one of us dead, to whom the time present and to come is perfectly the same; and consequently this wise man would be as uneasy as I am.

Anselm. Alas! what a jest is the condition of man, if it be such as you believe! he is born to aspire after every thing, and enjoy nothing; to be always upon his march, and arrive at no place.

DIALOGUE VII.

SOLIMAN and JULIETTA of Gonzaga.

S O L I M A N.

AH! why is this the first time I have seen you? and wherefore did I lose all the pains of my whole life in searching after you? I was on fire to have had the most beautiful person of Italy in my *seraglio*; and now I see nothing but a fleeting shade, that has no charms, but resembles all the rest.

Juliet. I can never thank you enough for the passion you conceived for me, upon the reputation of my beauty. It wonderfully augmented that reputation; and it is to you I am indebted for the most agreeable moments I ever passed. But above all, I reflect, with continual pleasure, on the night in which the pirate Barbarossa, in obedience to your commands, thought to have surprized me in Cajeta, and forced me to leave the city in extreme disorder and precipitation.

Solim. Wherefore then did you fly, if it gave you pleasure to be searched after for me?

Juliet. I was transported with the search, but more that I escaped it. Nothing ever flattered my vanity more than to think I was wanting to the happiness of the happy Soliman, and was talked of in the *seraglio*, a place so full of fine women: but, in troth, I desired no more; the *sera-*

glio has charms to those only that are wished for there, but none at all to those that are in it.

Solim. I perceive now what occasioned your fear; you could not digest the number of rivals there. Perhaps you were afraid that among such a multitude of fine women, a considerable part served for nothing but idle ornaments to the *seraglio*.

Juliet. Your servant!-----you are pleased here to charge me with very pretty thoughts.

Solim. Why-----what else has the *seraglio* so frightful?

Juliet. I was affronted to the last degree at the insufferable vanity of you sultans; who, to make an ostentation of your grandeur, lock up I know not how many handsome women, the majority of which are of no use to you, and yet are lost to all the world besides. And then, who do ye think can bear a lover, whose declarations of passion are indisputable commands; and who never sighs but in the tone of absolute authority? No----I was not at all fit for the *seraglio*, and you might have spared yourself the trouble of searching after me, for I should never have made your happiness.

Solim. How are you sure of that?

Juliet. Because I am sure you would never have made mine.

Solim. I do not take the consequence---what signified it whether I had made yours or not?

Juliet. What!-----do you think it is possible in love to be made happy without reciprocation? that there are solitary pleasures which need not

be communicated? and that we may enjoy them, when we do not bestow them? Fy!----such sentiments shock every heart of finer mold.

Solim. I am a Turk, do you see; and if I have not all the niceness in the world, I may be excused. And yet, methinks, I am not so much in the wrong neither. Did you not just now sharply condemn vanity?

Juliet. I did.

Solim. And is not this desire to make the happiness of others, a motion of vanity? would it not be intolerable pride not to consent to be made happy by you, but upon condition I make you happy too? a sultan is more modest. He receives pleasure from abundance of charming women, and never values himself upon giving them any. Nay ---you need not laugh, there is more solidity in this argument than you imagine. Think upon it, study the human heart, and you will find that this niceness you value so much, is but a sort of proud retribution; because people disdain to be in debt.

Juliet. Well, I grant you then vanity is necessary.

Solim. How! is this you that censured it so much?

Juliet. Yes, that which I spoke of, but this sort I approve perfectly. Is it too difficult for you to conceive that the good qualities of human nature are linked to others which are bad, and that it would be dangerous to cure it of all its faults?

Solim. But at this rate there is no knowing

where to fix. Pray, upon the whole, what must we think of vanity?

Juliet. At a certain point, it is a vice; but a little short of that, a virtue.

D I A L O G U E VIII.

PARACELSUS and MOLIERE.

M O L I E R E.

IF it were only for the sake of your name, I should be in love with you---Paracelsus! why, a man would take you for a Greek, or a Roman at least: no body would ever dream that Paracelsus was a Swiss philosopher.

Para. I have rendered this name as illustrious as it is elegant. My works are of wonderful direction to those who would enter into the secrets of nature, and above all to those who would soar to the sublime knowledge of the Genii and the Elementary Inhabitants.

Mol. I easily apprehend that those are the true sciences. To know the men we see every day is nothing, every body can do it. But to strike up an acquaintance with the Genii that no body ever saw, is quite another sort of business.

Para. Doubtless it is. I have set forth in the most exact manner, their nature, their employment, their inclinations, their different orders, and the powers they have in the universe.

Mol. How happy were you, who had got these wonderful lights! for there is the strongest reason

to believe you perfectly knew every thing that relates to mankind ; and yet a world of people could never reach so far as this.

Para. Phoo!----every little philosopher is master of as much as that.

Mol. I believe it; and you had nothing left to embarrass you about the nature of the human soul, its functions, and its union with the body?

Para. Hum!----to be free, it is impossible but there will be some difficulties remaining, to the world's end, upon those matters. But a man may know as much, do ye see, as philosophy can teach him.

Mol. And did you know no more?

Para. No. Why, is not that enough?

Mol. Enough! it is nothing. And thus you soared above men whom you did not know at all, to reach the Genii?

Para. There is something in the Genii that more excites our natural curiosity.

Mol. Ay; but it is inexcusable that we should apply to them, until after we have nothing more to learn of man; one would think the human understanding had exhausted every thing, when one sees it forming to itself objects of science that have perhaps no reality, and with which it embarrasses by way of diversion. And yet it is certain, there are real objects, which, if it pleased, would find it sufficient employment.

Para. The mind naturally undervalues sciences that are too simple, and pursues such as are full of mystery. It is only upon these it can exercise its whole force and activity.

Mol. So much the worse; what you say makes not at all for the mind's credit. Truth presents herself to it, but because she is plain, it knows her not, and takes ridiculous mysteries for her, only because, forsooth, they are mysteries. And I am persuaded that if most people saw the order of the universe, such as it is, without observing the virtues of numbers, the properties of planets, and fatalities linked to certain periods, or certain revolutions, they would not be able to forbear saying of this admirable order, What! is this all?

Para. You turn into ridicule mysteries which are too deep for your penetration, and which are reserved only for men of great capacity.

Mol. I esteem those who do not comprehend these mysteries, much beyond those who do. But it is the world's unhappiness that nature has not made all persons capable of § *not understanding* them.

Para. But you, that give sentence here with such authority! pray, what profession did you follow in your life-time.

Mol. Why truly a profession very different from yours. You studied the virtues of the Genii, and I studied the follies of mankind.

Para. A pretty study, by my troth!—Does not every body know that mankind is subject to a thousand follies?

Mol. Every body knows it in gross, and confusedly. But we ought to come to particulars, and then it is surprizing to see the vast extent of this science.

§ That is, wise enough to reject them for nonsense.

Para. And what use did you make of it?

Mol. I got together, in a certain place, as many people as I could, and there-----I shewed them that they were all a company of asses.

Para. Sure you employed thundering arguments to persuade them of that?

Mol. Not at all-----it is the easiest thing in the world. You may convince them of their folly without any great flights of eloquence, or studied reasoning. Their actions are so ridiculous, that you need only mimic them over before their eyes, and you shall see them even burst with laughing.

Para. I understand you now-----what-----you were a comedian then? Well, for my part, I could never comprehend the pleasure people take at a comedy. They go thither to laugh at manners represented, and why do not they laugh at the manners themselves?

Mol. To laugh at things in the world, a man must, as it were, be drawn out of it, and that the play-house performs. It gives you all in perspective, as if you had no part in it yourself.

Para. But a man soon mingles again in this *all* which he laughed at, and begins to be a party in it as before.

Mol. Very true. I composed a fable here the other day upon this subject. A young goose mounted the wing, with the same awkward air which all the kind have in that action; and during this momentary flight which had raised her about a foot high from the ground, the proud creature thus insulted the rest of the flock below:

Ah! you wretched animals! says she, that I see groveling beneath me; and that know not how to cleave the air as I do! But at those words down fell the cackling boaster, and ended the adventure.

Para. To what purpose then serve the reflections which plays help us to make, since they are like the flight of this goose, and in an instant we fall from them into the common fooleries.

Mol. Oh!----it is a great matter to have laughed at one's self. Nature has given us a wonderful facility that way, to hinder us from being our own bubbles. How often does it happen that while one party of us is very eager upon some action, another party stands by and makes a jest of them. And if need were, you might find a third party that would laugh at both the first together. Now, does not mankind appear a very motley and fantastical composition?

Para. I do not see that all this requires much thought. A few slight reflections, and some merry conceits, often ill applied, merit no such mighty esteem. But what strains of contemplation are necessary to treat upon more elevated subjects?

Mol. You are come back to your Genii, and I keep to my fools. In the mean time, though I have bestowed all my labour upon subjects so common to the whole world, I can prophesy to you that my plays will out-live your sublime works. Every thing is subject to change of fashion. The productions of the mind are not secure from the fate of clothes. What a world of books and other writings have I seen buried with their authors! just as in some countries they interr,
with

with the deceased, the things they most delighted in while they lived. I know perfectly what revolutions may happen in the empire of letters, and yet, with all this, I will warrant the continuance of my pieces. I can tell you the reason-----he that will paint for eternity must paint fools.

DIALOGUE IX.

MARY STUART and DAVID RICCIO.

D. R I C C I O.

NO-----I shall never be comforted upon my death.

M. Stuart. Yet methinks it was a very handsome one for a musician. The principal nobility in the court of Scotland, and the king my husband himself, were forced to conspire against you, and never was there more formality in putting to death the greatest prince upon earth.

D. Riccio. So pompous a death was never intended for a poor lutenist, whom necessity had driven out of Italy into Scotland. It had been much better to have let me wear out my days softly as one of your music, than by raising me to the rank of a minister of state, to shorten my life.

M. Stuart. I could never have expected to find thee so insensible! What! was it a slight distinction to let thee dine alone with me every day? trust me, Riccio, a favour of that kind was no wrong to thy reputation.

D. Riccio. No: all the wrong I know was, that it obliged me to pay my life for receiving it too often. For alas! I was sitting *tete a tete* with you at table, as usual, when I saw the king enter with the ruffian that was picked out to be my executioner, because he was naturally the most frightful Scot that ever was born, and his aspect had lately been made more frightful by a long quartan ague. I do not know whether he struck me or no---but to the best of my remembrance, the very sight of him murdered me.

M. Stuart. I have honoured thy memory so far as to place thee in the tomb of the kings of Scotland.

D. Riccio. How!--is my body entombed with the kings of Scotland?

M. Stuart. Nothing more true.

D. Riccio. I have been so little sensible of that good fortune, that, believe me, it is the first notice I have ever heard of it.-----O my lute! was I forced to quit thee, to amuse myself with the cares of governing a kingdom!

M. Stuart. Still complaining!--Do you know now that my death was a thousand times more unhappy than yours?

D. Riccio. It may be so; you were born in a condition that is subject to terrible reverses: but poor I was born to have died in my bed. Nature had placed me in the fittest station in the world for it, obscure, and without a fortune, only with a tolerable voice, and a genius to play the lute.

M. Stuart. That lute still possesses thy heart. But alas! for one unlucky moment, how many

agreeable days hadst thou enjoyed before? What wouldst thou have done, hadst thou never been better than a musician? that mean fortune would have soon distasted thee.

D. Riccio. No. I would have searched out for happiness within myself.

M. Stuart. Go, thou art a fool. Thou hast spoiled thyself here by pedantic reflections, or by keeping company with the philosophers. It is a likely matter that men should find happiness in themselves!

D. Riccio. They want only to be persuaded that they may. A poet of my country has described an enchanted castle, where lovers and their mistresses are perpetually seeking one another with extreme earnestness and inquietude, they meet every moment, and yet never know it. There is a charm like this upon the happiness of men; they have it in their own thoughts, yet are never aware of it; it presents itself a thousand times to them, while they still travel afar off to find it.

M. Stuart. Away with your cant and visions of philosophy! if nothing without us contributes to make us happy, are we of a humour, I pray, to take the pains to be so by our reason?

D. Riccio. Why not? happiness is well worth that pains.

M. Stuart. It were pains to no purpose, and happiness is by no means consistent with it. We cease to be happy the moment we feel our endeavour to be so. If a man felt all the parts of his body labouring to sustain themselves in a good condition, would you think him well? No. Hap-

pineness is like health, it must be in men without their placing it there; and if there is a happiness which reason produces, it is like that health which is only maintained by the force of art and medicines, which is always very weak, and very uncertain.

D I A L O G U E X.

The third false DEMETRIUS, and monsieur
DES CARTES.

D E S C A R T E S.

I OUGHT to know the north almost as well as you; I spent a good part of my life philosophizing in Holland, and at last died in Sweden more a philosopher than ever.

False Dem. According to the scheme you give me, what a fine soft life was yours! employed only about philosophy! I had not the privilege to pass mine so quietly.

Des Cartes. Thank your own folly. What put it into your head to think of making yourself czar of Muscovy, and to take those measures for it which you did? You tried to pass for the prince Demetrius, who was rightful heir to the throne, and yet you had already before your eyes the example of two pretended Demetrius's, who had been detected for cheats, and perished miserably. You ought surely to have taken the pains to contrive some new imposture. There was not

the least probability that this, which had been tried before should have success.

Falſe Dem. Between friends, the Muſcovites are not the moſt refined people in the world: they have the madneſs to pretend to reſemble the ancient Greeks, but God knows in what.

Des Cartes. Yet, as great ſots as they were, they could not ſuffer the cheat of three falſe Demetrius's ſucceſſively. No----when you began to play that part, I dare ſwear they cried almoſt all, with an air of diſdain,-----*What! more Demetrius's ſtill?*

Falſe Dem. Yet for all that I made myſelf a conſiderable party: the name of Demetrius was beloved, the people perpetually ran after it, and you know what the people are.

Des Cartes. But, pray, did not the ill fate of your two brother-cheats ſcare you?

Falſe Dem. Quite the contrary; was it not reaſonable to believe it muſt be the true Demetrius that durſt appear, after the defeat of the other two? it would have been the ſame preſumption had I been Demetrius himſelf.

Des Cartes. But ſuppoſe you had been the firſt that aſſumed this name, how could you have the face to pretend to it, without being ſure you could back your pretence with very probable proofs?

Falſe Dem. Hold a little----and let me aſk you, who are ſo full of your queſtions here, and ſo hard to be ſatiſfied, how you durſt aſpire to make yourſelf head of a new philoſophy which was to contain all the truths that were unknown until then?

Des Cartes. Oh! I found a great many things which had probability enough to flatter me that they were true, and novelty enough to make a new sect.

False Dem. And was you not terrified by the example of so many philosophers, who, with opinions as well grounded as yours, were discovered at last for mountebanks? a man might reckon you up a long list of them, if he pleased, and you can reckon but two sham Demetrius's before me. I was but the third in my kind, that set up for deceiving the Muscovites----but you were more than a thousand deep in the list of these who undertook to practise upon the faith of all mankind.

Des Cartes. You knew you was not the prince Demetrius; but I published no more than what I really believed, nor believed it without probable appearances. I never recovered out of my philosophy until I came hither.

False Dem. What signifies that? your sincerity did not make you less need a world of assurance to be so positive that you were the happy man at last who had discovered the truth. The world has been abused with that pretence by so many new-philosophers already, that when any *new-philosophers* appear, I wonder every one does not cry out---*What! more philosophy still?*

Des Cartes. I must tell you, if people are always deluded by the promises of philosophers, it is not without reason. Some little truths are discovered from time to time, which, though not important, serve to amuse. But for the depth of

philosophy, I confess there is scarce any progress made in it at all. I believe too that men often find the truth in some considerable articles, but the mischief is, they do not know when they find it. For philosophy, if a dead man may be so bold, resembles a certain play among children, where one with his eyes blinded runs after the rest; if he catches any one he is obliged to name him, else he must let go his prize, and run again. It is the same in the search of truth; for though we philosophers have our eyes sufficiently blinded, we make a shift sometimes to lay hold of her, but to what purpose? we cannot justify to her that it is she, and in the same moment she slips from us again.

Falsè Dem. It is but too plain then, that she is not made for us, and you will see, at last, people will not so much as think of finding her; they will lose their courage, and throw up the game.

Des Cartes. I can assure you, you are a false prophet. Men have an incredible courage for any thing they are once infatuated with: every one is confident that the thing which has been refused to all beside, is only a reserve for him. Nay, four and twenty thousand years hence, you will have philosophers who will pretend to have dispossessed all the errors that reigned for thirty thousand years before; and people, who will believe the world has but just then begun to open its eyes.

Falsè Dem. How! was it such an infinite hazard to undertake a third time to deceive the Muscovites, and will it be no hazard at all to at-

tempt the deceiving the whole of mankind after thirty thousand times? that calls them greater bubbles than the Muscovites.

Des Cartes. They are so, in the affair of truth: they rave upon it more than ever the Muscovites did on the name of Demetrius.

Falſe Dem. Well—if I were to tread the ſtage again, let me periſh if I would be a falſe Demetrius; no—I would even turn philoſopher. But what if people ſhould grow ſick of philoſophy, and ſit down at laſt in deſpair of ever finding out truth! for that I ſhould be terribly afraid of.

Des Cartes. You had much more reaſon to fear when you played the prince. Men will never be out of heart, depend upon it; and ſince the moderns are no happier than the ancients in diſcovering the truth, it is but juſt they ſhould be as happy as they in hoping it: for, vain as it is, this hope is always agreeable. If neither have a right to the enjoyment of truth, yet both have, at leaſt, to the pleaſure of the ſame error.

D I A L O G U E IX.

The Duchefs of Valentinois and ANNA BULLEN.

ANNA BULLEN.

~ I ADMIRE your good luck. S. Valier, your father, commits a crime, as if it were on purpoſe to make your fortune. He is condemned to loſe his head, you go and beg the king's pardon for him: to be a pretty woman, and aſk favours of

a young prince, is an unavoidable engagement to grant some; and thus you very genteelly made yourself mistress to Francis the first.

Duch. of Val. The nicest part of my good luck was my being led into an amour by the duty of a daughter to save her father's life. My inclination to gallantry might very commodiously ly concealed, under so decent and reputable a covering.

A. Bul. But your inclination soon discovered itself by what followed; for your gallantries much out-last the danger of your father.

Duch. of Val. No matter----it is the beginning of an amour is all the importance. The world knows, that whoever makes one step will make more: so that the only concern is, to make the first with a grace. I am so vain now as to think that my conduct was not ill suited to the critical opportunity which fortune presented to me; and that I shall not pass in history for mistress of a middle share of wit. It has been thought very extraordinary that the lord high-constable Montmorency was the minister and favourite of three kings. I was the mistress of two, and that I pretend is something more.

A. Bul. I will not dispute your ingenuity; but you must give me leave to think my own exceeded it. You made yourself long beloved as a mistress, but I made myself a wife. A king applies his cares to you as long as his heart is warmed, but this costs him nothing; if he makes you a queen, it is in his extremity, and when all other hopes fail him.

Duch. of Val. But the passion of a lover needs continued arts to keep it alive. Whereas a marriage once accomplished excuses you from farther trouble. It is easy to exasperate love when you never satisfy it at all: and when you satisfy it, it is as difficult not to quench it. In short, you had nothing to do but to persist always in the same severity of refusing, and it was my part to be perpetually granting with new agreeableness.

A. Bul. Since you press me so hard with your reasons, I am obliged to add, to what I said before, that when I made myself a wife it was not because I had a world of virtue.

Duch. of Val. And when I made myself beloved with so much constancy, it was not because I had a world of fidelity.

A. Bul. I will tell you more then---I had neither virtue, nor the reputation of it.

Duch. of Val. You might have spared telling me that---for, reputation, in my account, is the same with virtue.

A. Bul. I should think you have no reason to reckon among your advantages a few infidelities you acted against your lover, and which, in all appearance, were secret. They can signify little to the increase of your glory. But when I began to be loved by the king of England, the public, who were acquainted with my adventures, did not keep the secret for me, and yet I triumphed over fame.

Duch. of Val. I could perhaps prove to you, if I were disposed, that I was so little mysterious in my infidelities to Henry the second, that I can

make a merit of it if I please; but I will not insist upon that. The defect of fidelity may be either hid, or at worst repaired; but how will you repair the defect of youth? yet this I performed. I was all coquette, and I made myself be adored, but withal I was in age. But for you---you were young, and yet suffered yourself to be beheaded. As much a grand-mother as I was, I had address enough to preserve my head upon my shoulders.

A. Bul. I must own you have hit the blot of my life, therefore no more of that. And yet I cannot surrender, no, not to your age itself, though that is your main hold. It was certainly less difficult to disguise that, than my former conduct. I must have extremely disturbed his reason, who would resolve to take me for a wife. But for the man who always believed you handsome, you had nothing to do but to prepossess his eyes in your favour, and to accustom them, by a little at a time, to the changes in your beauty.

Duch. of Val. Ah! you are much a stranger to the humour of men. When to their eyes we appear lovely, we appear to their minds whatever we please, even virtuous, for example, though we are quite the reverse of it. And all the difficulty lies in appearing lovely to their eyes as long as we please.

A. Bul. I am convinced, and I yield to you---but you will let me then into the secret, how you repaired your age---you may trust me, I am dead you know, and can make no advantage of it.

Duch. of Val. Why truly---I cannot tell. No-

thing is more frequent than to perform very great things and not know how, and then we are surprized that we have done them. Go ask Caesar, how he made himself master of the world? perhaps he may pause for an answer.

A. Bul. You make a glorious comparison!

Duch. of Val. It is a just one. To inspire love at my age I stood in need of as surprizing a fortune as that of Caesar. The best of it is, that to those who have accomplished such extraordinary things as he and I, the world never fails afterwards to attribute most infallible designs and secrets, and to do them more honour than perhaps they ever deserved.

D I A L O G U E XII.

FERNANDO CORTEZ and MONTEZUMA.

F. CORTEZ.

CONFESS the truth. You were very stupid, you Americans, when you imagined the Spaniards were descended from the region of fire, because of their cannon, and thought their ships vast birds that flew upon the sea.

Montez. I grant it.----But I would be glad to know whether the Athenians were a polite people?

F. Cort. How!----why it is they have been the great masters of politeness to the rest of mankind.

Montez. Very well. And what do ye think of the stratagem by which the tyrant Pisistratus regained the citadel of Athens from whence he had
been

been driven out? did not he dress up a woman in the habit of Minerva, who, they say, was the guardian goddess of Athens? did not he drive over the city in a chariot with this rare divinity of his own making, who held him by the hand, and cried out to the Athenians,---*Behold! I bring Pisistratus to you, and command you to receive him!* and did not these originals of wit and politeness submit to the tyrant, in pure obedience to Minerva, who, it seems, had explained her will with her own mouth?

F. Cort. Who helped you to this piece of scandal about the Athenians?

Montez. Oh, since I have been here, I have applied myself to learn history, by my conversations with several of the dead. In short, I shall make you grant, that the Athenians were somewhat greater bubbles than we. For example,---we had never seen ships nor cannon, but they had seen women; and when Pisistratus undertook to reduce them by means of his goddess, he shewed more contemptuous thoughts of them than you did of us in subduing us with your artillery.

F. Cort. There is no people in the world but may once be trapp'd. They are taken at a surprise; the multitude bear along the people of sense. What shall I say? there concur besides some particular circumstances which a man cannot divine, and which perhaps would escape his observation, though he saw them.

Montez. But can you say it was by surprise that the Greeks always believed the knowledge of futurity to be inclosed in a cave under ground,

from whence it issued out in exhalations? by what artifice were they made to think, that when the moon was in eclipse they could recover her out of her fits by a hideous noise? and how chanced there was but a very small party that durst whisper among themselves that she was only obscured by the shadow of the earth? I say nothing of the Romans, and of their inviting the gods to eat with them on their festival days; nor of the holy chickens, whose appetites decided every thing in the capital city of the whole earth. To conclude, you cannot reproach me with one piece of American folly, which I will not undertake to over-match in your countries, and yet I will engage to bring none into play but Greek follies or Roman.

F. Cort. Notwithstanding these follies, the Greeks and Romans invented all arts and sciences, of which you have not the least idea.

Montez. It was our happiness not to have known there were sciences in the world, we should not perhaps else have had prudence enough to forbear being learned. All people are not capable of following the example of those Greeks who took such pains to preserve themselves from the contagion of the sciences of their neighbours. As for the arts, America found ways to shift without them, more wonderful perhaps than the European arts themselves. It is easy to compose histories, when you can write; but we did not know how to write, and yet made histories. You may make bridges well enough, when you can build in the water; but the difficulty is, to be wholly ignorant of building, and yet make

bridges. You ought to remember too, that the Spaniards found some riddles in our country which they were at a loss to expound; for example, stones of a prodigious magnitude, raised to such an amazing height as they could not conceive possible to be done without machines. What do you say to all this? I do not see yet that you have very clearly proved the advantages which Europe has above America.

F. Cort. They are proved sufficiently by every thing that distinguishes politeness from barbarity. Civility reigns among us, force and violence are banished; all the powers are moderated by justice; all wars are founded upon lawful causes; and to shew you how nicely scrupulous we are, we did not move a step in that descent upon you, until we had critically examined whether your country belonged to us or no, and decided the question in our own favour.

Montez. This doubtless was a courtesy which we barbarians could never merit. But I fancy you are just and civil among one another in the same manner as you were scrupulous in regard to us. Whoever should strip Europe of her formalities, would render her very like America. Civility measures all your steps, dictates all your speeches, intricates all your discourses, and perplexes all your actions, but does not enter into your hearts; and all the justice which should be in your designs, is found only in your pretexts.

F. Cort. I will not be responsible for mens hearts: we see only their out-sides. An heir that loses a relation, and gets a considerable estate,

dresses all in black. Is he afflicted? not at all, perhaps; however, if he did not dress so, he would violate reason.

Montez. I know what you would say. It is not reason governs among you, but she enters her protest at least that things should go otherwise than they do. That heirs, for example, should be sorry for the loss of their relations; they admit this protest, and in acknowledgement of it they wear black. Your formalities serve for nothing but to notify that she has a right, which you do not think fit to let her execute. And instead of doing what is reasonable, you only represent what you ought to do.

F. Cort. Is not that a great deal? Reason has so little power among you, that she cannot so much as substitute any thing in your actions, that may remind you, she ought to be there herself.

Montez. But you call her to mind as unprofitably as some certain Greeks, of whom I have been told here, called to mind their original. They were settled in Tuscany, a country barbarous in their esteem, and by degrees they had fallen in with its customs so entirely, as to forget their own. They felt, however, I know not what regret that they were become barbarians, and on a certain day they assembled annually. They read in Greek their ancient laws, which they no longer observed, and by that time scarce understood: they wept, then separated: and at their departure, with pleasure re-assumed the ways of living which were customary to the place. Their case was the same with respect to the Grecian laws, as yours

with respect to reason. They knew these laws were in being, and they spoke of them, but slightly however, and without effect; yet they expressed some regret about them: but for reason, whom you have abandoned, you have no regret at all; you have, it seems, got the habit of knowing and despising her.

F. Cortez. However, in knowing her better, people are at least more in a condition to follow her.

Montez. It is only in this particular then that we will yield you the advantage. Alas! that we happened to have no ships to go and discover your lands, and that we had not determined that they belonged to us! we should have had, at least, as much right to conquer them, as you had to conquer ours.

THE END.



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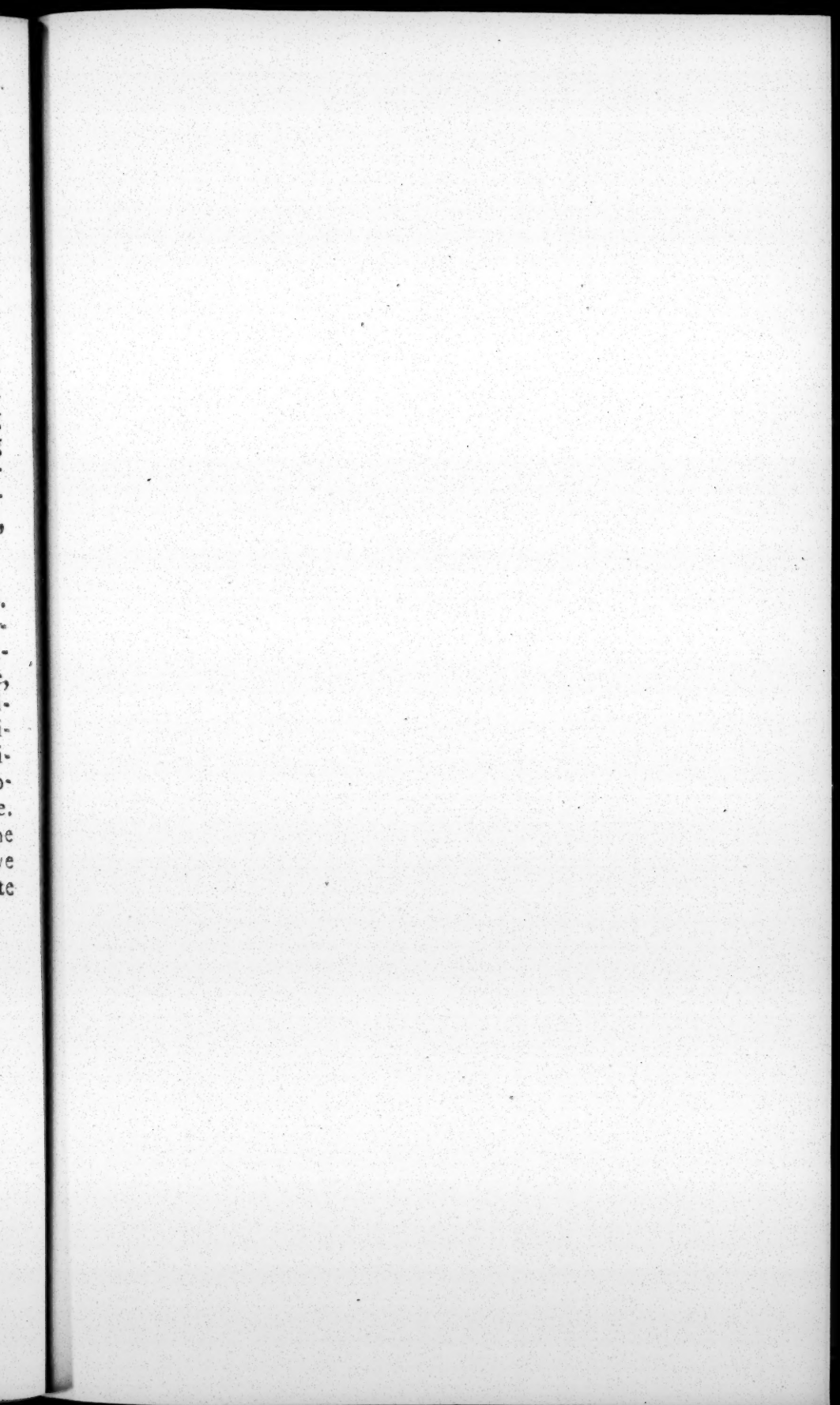
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